

**FREE EUROSTAR TICKET**  
IT'S NOT TOO LATE  
START  
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TODAY: TOKEN  
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**BEST FOR JOBS**  
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SECTION 5

Moral debate is boost for Labour

## Blair surges even farther into the lead

By Peter Riddell

TONY BLAIR and Labour have jumped to their highest poll ratings since the spring after the party conferences and the Government's recent disarray on policy, according to the latest MORI poll for *The Times*.

The poll, undertaken last weekend, puts Labour on 56 per cent against 28 per cent for the Conservatives and dashes Tory hopes that the party might at last have started to narrow the gap significantly.

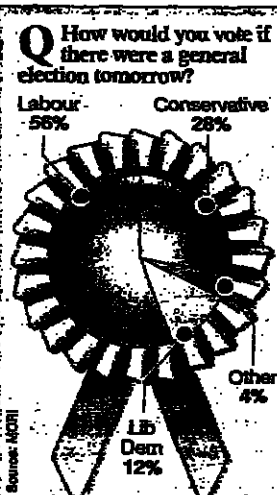
Labour's lead has been in double figure for four years — and at least 20 points for nearly three. With only six months to go before the likely election date of May 1, the Tories have more to recover and less time to do it than any party has yet achieved. At the same stage of previous parliaments, the Tories were either ahead in the polls or — as in 1991 — only a few points behind.

Support for Labour, which had declined during the late summer, has risen by four points over the past month to the highest level since last March. The Tories have slipped one point and the Liberal Democrats have dropped two to 12 per cent.

The poll comes at a time when the parties have been trying to seize the initiative over law and order, morality and education. But the Government has suffered from a series of public gaffes and divisions over gun control, the sponsorship of bills on stalking and paedophiles and over corporal punishment in schools.

Labour and Mr Blair, who has taken a high profile on these moral and family values issues, have benefited and there has been a dramatic increase in the Labour leader's personal approval rating.

That had fallen sharply during the summer after divisions within Labour and criticism of his leadership. But since late September, those saying that they are satisfied with the way he is doing his job have jumped from 42 to 51 per cent, while those expressing dissatisfaction have dropped from 35 to 27 per cent.



Q How would you vote if there were a general election tomorrow?  
Labour 56% Conservative 28% Other 16%

The main consolation for the Tories is that much of Labour's gain has been at the expense of the Liberal Democrats and other parties, and that Labour has for several years enjoyed much improved poll ratings after the party conferences.

Moreover, some key underlying trends are moving in favour of the Tories. Dissatisfaction with the performance

of the Government and the Prime Minister continues to decline, albeit very slowly. The public still remains dissatisfied with the way Mr Major is doing his job by a 2-1 margin and is dissatisfied with the Government by 4-1. The public is also more confident about the economy. The MORI economic optimism index, measuring those expecting that the general economic condition of the country will improve rather than get worse over the next 12 months stands at -1 point. This is the same as a month ago but compares with an average of -10 points in the first half of this year.

A report out today says that consumer optimism about the economy and household finances is at its highest level since before the recession and is growing in most parts of the country.

The survey, from the economic consultants Business Strategies, points to receding worries over unemployment and expectations of continuing low inflation.

The well-publicised conference of the Referendum Party in Brighton 12 days ago has produced only a small dividend for Sir James Goldsmith. The number of those interviewed mentioning the party has risen from 12 to 17 over the past month — or barely 1 per cent of the overall sample.

MORI interviewed 1,747 people at 161 sampling points between October 25 and 28. Voting intention figures exclude those who say they will not vote (6 per cent), are undecided (6 per cent) or who refused to say (4 per cent).

Feel-better factor, page 25

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Standing together: John Major and Gillian Shephard showing a united front at the Cardinal Vaughan School

## Major still feels sore 40 years after geography master's six of the best

By Andrew Pierce

THE Prime Minister's well-publicised opposition to corporal punishment may date back to a humiliating experience when he was subjected to six of the best in front of 24 classmates.

John Major received the once-in-a-lifetime punishment when he was still in short trousers as a pupil at Rutlish School, Wimbledon, in the mid-1950s. It was administered by the geography master, Hubert Walker, because the future Prime Minister did not do his homework.

Mr Walker, a popular teacher despite his propensity to swish the cane, had in-

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complaining to his parents, Gwen and Tom Major-Ball. Mr Walker always announced at parents' meetings, cane in hand, that if any of them objected to their children being beaten they should speak out. Mr and Mrs Major-Ball raised no objections.

Mr Walker was encouraged to adopt authoritarian measures by Mr Blenkinsop, the headmaster, whose school regime included prefects and masters in regulation mortarboards. Mr Blenkinsop — known to the boys as Champi — on the Wonder Horse because of his big teeth — regularly administered the cane to ill-disciplined youngsters.

The caning of the Prime Minister brought back un-

comfortable memories for his elder brother, Terry, who was caned twice at his primary school. He told *The Times*: "John's punishment was never forgotten."

Continued on page 2, col 3

structured Mr Major's class to go to an industrial estate to note the name of all the companies. But it involved a mile-and-a-half trudge, the boys rebelled and Mr Major — who has been beset by revolts since becoming leader of the Tory Party — learnt what a bruising experience rebellion can be. When only one of the 25 boys handed in a completed exercise book, restriction came in the form of 24 sore bottoms.

There was no point in

believing the evidence of the policeman.

Passing sentence, Mr Justice Phipps said: "I have rarely come across a case of such systematic and persistent cruelty to young children."

He told Neave that she was "plainly an inadequate person and wholly unfit to be a mother", adding that the sentence had to "reflect the public abhorrence of this cruelty."

Neave said in a statement through her solicitor, Paul Bacon: "I have always maintained my innocence. Many people who lived near me were quick to condemn me without having heard a word of evidence."

"I have had to wait for this moment now to be able to say to them that I am not guilty of killing my own child. I hope the police will now redouble their efforts to find the true killer of Rikki."

She has already been in jail for 18 months awaiting trial and could be eligible for release in two years.

Social services failed, page 5

MI6 gave France list of 'moles'

MI6 provided the French secret service with a list of some 300 French diplomats and foreign service officials suspected of being communist spies during the Cold War. *Le Monde* reported.

The file was handed over in 1993, when Alain Juppé, the French Prime Minister, was Foreign Minister. Page 13

Chinese dissident jailed for 11 years

Wang Dan, a Chinese dissident, was jailed for 11 years for conspiring to subvert the Communist Government. An appeal is expected to fail. Wang, 27, was a student leader of the pro-democracy movement in Tiananmen Square in 1989. Page 12

Postal strike talks

Talks to avert Christmas post disruption may start today after staff voted heavily to continue their long-running strike campaign over pay and hours. Page 2

## Loan rate rise 'to check inflation'

By Alasdair Murray  
Caroline Merrell and  
Philip Webster

KENNETH CLARKE acted yesterday to prevent a damaging increase in interest rates in the run-up to the general election by announcing a quarter-point rise in base rates to 6 per cent.

The increase, the first upward move for almost two years, was designed to keep the Government's fight against inflation on course.

However, major mortgage lenders decided not to follow the Chancellor's lead and left mortgage rates unchanged at their lowest levels for 30 years.

Mr Clarke said that he had taken the decision to raise rates to ensure that the economy would remain on track to meet the Government's inflation target of 2.5 per cent.

"Experience has shown that by increasing rates early, as I did in 1994 and I am doing today, possible inflation can be nipped in the bud," he said.

The Chancellor has been under pressure in recent months from the City and the Bank of England to raise interest rates to ensure that the economy does not overheat. Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England, said the increase "improves the chances of achieving the Chancellor's inflation target".

The pound strengthened sharply after the announcement, but shares suffered. Sterling's trade weighted index closed at a two-and-a-half-year high and while the FTSE 100 fell 29.6 points to 3963.6.

Mr Clarke, speaking in the Commons after agreeing the rise at a morning meeting with Mr George, said that he was "ahead of the game" and was acting now to prevent rises in inflation in 18 months to two years' time when he expected there still to be a Conservative government.

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Graham Scarsent, page 29

## Rwandan troops in raid on Zaire

Rwanda sent commandos across the Ruzizi river into eastern Zaire, bringing the two countries to the verge of war. The Rwandan Government threatened a stronger retaliation against an alliance of Rwanda's former armed forces, Hutu extremist militia and Zaire's army. Page 14

Shortly after the verdict, the jury listened to a catalogue of cruelty and neglect of Rikki and his three sisters. She had burnt one daughter's hand with a cigarette, squirted washing up liquid down Rikki's throat and turned the boy out of the house wearing only pyjamas in the early hours of a December morning when he was only three.

Neave, a drug abuser, had also threatened to kill Rikki unless social workers agreed to take him into care. He had

been on Cambridgeshire County Council's social services department's "at risk" register and there were calls for a public inquiry last night into their handling of the case and the way in which they failed to heed the countless warning signs. The council announced that it had suspended two social workers.

Rikki's body was found in woods near his home on the Welland Estate in Peterborough. PC Robert McNeill, who was called when Rikki

disappeared, told the court that he had searched the spot where the body was later found.

He carried out the search at the same time that Neave was talking to police about his disappearance. This meant that she could not have dumped his body, and with no scientific evidence linking her to the murder, this suggested her innocence.

The judge, in his summing up, directed the jury to acquit Neave of murder if they

## Murdered boy's cruel mother jailed

By Joanna Bale

RUTH NEAVE, the mother accused of strangling her six-year-old son Rikki, was cleared of his murder yesterday but jailed for seven years after admitting cruelty.

The boy's father and other members of his family appeared shocked as the Northampton Crown Court jury of seven women and five men found Neave, 28, not guilty. She had denied murder but admitted two charges of child cruelty.

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# Heavyweights make the House tremble

GOOD Commons speeches are like buses. None turn up for ages then two turn up at the same time. Just when you despair of witnessing any Commons performance of any stature between now and the next election, two barnstorming orators remind you that good debaters still exist at Westminster.

First over the hill in the Economy debate yesterday afternoon was Gordon Brown. We could almost hear the hooves thundering as he approached. The moment he rose, the Shadow Chancellor was on a roll. Buoyed by the Chancellor's embarrassment over interest rates, Mr Brown took his speech at a furious gallop, and was never un-

horsed. Critics scoff (Clarke did) that this was the speech Brown always makes. So it was, but you might just as well complain that Pavarotti always sings *Nessun dorma*. So he does, the important question being whether he belts it out in better or worse throat than before. I have never heard Mr Brown belting out his familiar personal solo of dire economic news in more confident voice.

Like an Old Testament Jeremiah, and in his peculiar thunderous growl, Brown bashed the table and hampered home all the old Family Favourites from the *Shadow Chancellor's Songbook*. Britain was being overtaken in "the world economic league";



**MATTHEW PARRIS**  
POLITICAL SKETCH

Britain was high on the European inflation league and low on the European investment league. The OECD, VAT, the EU and CGT were flung around the Chamber, as acronyms, quotations and statistics bounced from the rafters and clattered to the floor.

While Brown stormed on, knocking interruptors aside, this sketch was able to identify the key to his idiosyncratic speaking style. The first part of a sentence is delivered normally, but a few words from the end, Brown suddenly

comes down hard on each successive word, hitting each singly, stopping, then hitting the next — the final word being roared at the lowest key with a dreadful finality. It is like a plane coming in to land, smacking the runway, bouncing, and coming to a shuddering halt. Thus: "They're near the bottom of every One. Of These. Leagues." Or: "The truth about the economy is that they are economical. With. The. Truth." The effect is awesome. Brown sat down to a heartening cheer.

Kenneth Clarke rose to reply. He had just had to raise interest rates — and now witnessed a revitalised Opposition. Anyone of less Tigerish buoyancy would have been disheartened, but not our Ken. Within seconds he, too, was up to speed, throwing out statistics of his own, ridiculing Brown's gloom.

"Best inflation for 50 years!" "Unemployment at its lowest level for five and a half years!" Clarke soon had the Tories laughing and cheering behind him. "The only people who don't believe the strength of the economy are either mad, dead, or sitting on the benches opposite!" he cried, starting the sentence with insufficient puff and ending it in that

strangled squawk he has made his own. Clarke began to ink Brown, who interrupted him. The Chancellor reacted by goading him more, and by the end the Shadow Chancellor had bounced up seven times to protest or question.

It is said that little divides these two men ideologically. Certainly they were unconsciously aping each other's style: trading statistical missiles, parrying with scornful laughter, resting elbows on the dispatch box, or placing one hand on hip and sweeping the air with the other. Two political heavyweights, in every sense. Irresistible force met immovable object yesterday, and, for one glorious hour, the Commons floor shook.

## Parents to have say on moral code in schools

Parents are to play a central role in the dispute between the Education Secretary and her advisers on whether overt support for marriage should be part of a moral code for schools, which was published in draft form yesterday.

The School Curriculum and Assessment Authority rushed out its paper ahead of schedule after Gillian Shephard quoted passages in the *Commons*. The proposals, reported in *The Times* earlier this week, were distilled from the views of a 150-strong forum. They include a commitment to family life but no mention of the importance of marriage. The paper issued for consultation acknowledges that five members of the forum objected. Nicholas Tate, page 20, Letters, page 21

## £410m aid for beef farmers

A £415 million package of measures to help farmers hit by the BSE beef crisis was agreed by European Union farm ministers yesterday. More than half the money will go to Britain, France and Germany and only Germany voted against the plan at the end of the three-day meeting. Demand for beef in Europe has since fallen by 15 per cent since March and farmers' losses are estimated at £1 billion.

## Bank-plot couple guilty

A couple were convicted yesterday of an elaborate £10 million plot involving the only cheque ever to have been stolen from the Bank of England. The business consultant Peter Garnett, 54, and his accountant wife Linda, 52, of Southwark, south London, showed no emotion at Middlesex Guildhall Crown Court as the jury convicted them of conspiracy to defraud. They are to be sentenced on November 23.

## Tanker oil washed ashore

Thousands of tonnes of crude oil is being washed up on the Pembrokeshire coast as high winds and tides drive in pollution from the *Sea Empress*, which ran aground in March. The sludge is affecting beaches near Milford Haven and threatening shellfish. The contamination is believed to be coming from oil that seeped into the sand. Less than 5 per cent of the 72,000 tonnes spilled in the disaster was recovered.

## Anti-boxing advert launched

A cinema advertisement that uses a conker fight to portray the dangers of boxing has been launched by the British Medical Association. The association has repeatedly called for a ban on boxing in the light of medical evidence that it causes lasting brain damage. In the past three years, six boxers have been seriously injured in the ring and two have died.

## Catholic poll rejects celibacy

More than two out of three Roman Catholics believe compulsory celibacy for priests should end, according to a poll of 1,000 parishioners in England and Wales published in tomorrow's *Catholic Herald*. The survey shows 69 per cent believe priests should be allowed to marry, with 21 per cent believing that the rule will change soon, and 19 per cent that the church will never change its mind on the issue.

## £300m plan for Cambridge

A draft plan for a £300 million science and technology centre on the outskirts of Cambridge was announced by the university yesterday. It is part of a strategy to provide modern research and teaching facilities away from cramped buildings in the city centre. Dons and local people will have a chance to examine the scheme before any planning application is submitted next year.

## Muggers target BBC staff

BBC staff are being terrorised by muggers targeting their expensive laptop computers as they travel to work at Television Centre. Nineteen workers have been robbed this year with one woman suffering three broken ribs after being knocked unconscious. The computers can fetch £500 on the black market. The BBC has laid on free shuttle buses for the short trip to its Wood Lane HQ, London.

## Opera house plan approved

The Royal Opera House won approval yesterday for plans to build a temporary South Bank theatre while its historic Covent Garden building is renovated. The decision follows a public inquiry and saves the Royal Opera and Royal Ballet from having to go on tour during the £214 million renovation. Objectors said the site opposite the Tower of London should have been used to alleviate the housing problem.

## Progress of scrapie slowed

Researchers in Milan have shown that the progress of the sheep disease scrapie can be slowed by using drugs developed to treat bladder cancer. The effects are small, prolonging the life of hamsters infected with scrapie by a fifth, and the drugs highly toxic. But the results, in *New Scientist*, offer evidence that similar diseases, which include "mad cow" disease and the human brain disease CJD can be slowed.

## Smokers blamed for fires

Smokers cause more than 9,000 serious fires each year, killing up to 200 people, injuring 2,000, and causing more than £20 million damage to homes, according to a study by the insurers CGA Direct. In West Sussex and South Yorkshire, more than 18 per cent of fires were caused by smokers. The company may offer discounts to non-smokers.

## Magazine editor's suicide

Tim Nicholson, 32, Editor of the men's magazine *Arena*, threw himself to his death from a cliff at Saltdan, near Brighton, because he disagreed with editorial decisions that had been forced on him in his latest issue. Police discovered a suicide note left at the top of the cliff as well as a copy of the magazine with savage crossings-out, the inquest was told.

## Strike vote threatens Christmas post service

By Philip Bassett, Industrial Editor

TALKS aimed at averting disruption to the Christmas post are to begin immediately between the Royal Mail and union leaders after postal workers strongly backed a resumption of industrial action in the long dispute over pay and hours.

Members of the Communication Workers' Union (CWU) voted by 64,919 to 40,581 to continue the campaign of strikes, which began in the summer and has cost the Royal Mail £40 million. The result, 61 per cent supporting further action on a turnout of 78 per cent, gave the union an "unquestionable mandate" to reject the Royal Mail's offer on pay, jobs, hours and working practices, said Alan Johnson, its joint general secretary.

But last night both sides were hopeful that talks, which could start today, could avert the threat to Christmas deliveries after the union made a significant concession on the management's desire to introduce US-style teamworking.

The union's executive will meet next week and, should

the talks with the Post Office fail to produce signs of a settlement, will consider further action.

Under current employment law, strikes have to take place within 28 days of the declaration of a ballot result, or the ballot's legal mandate falls, so any strikes would occur during the start of the build-up of Christmas mail from late November onwards. Mr Johnson said: "We have no desire to see postal services taken away at Christmas. We want to see a negotiated settlement."

Leaders of the CWU came under intense pressure for a reballoon — including calls for a fresh vote from Tony Blair, the Labour leader — after lengthy negotiations produced new versions of the Post Office's offer on pay, working practices and teamworking.

The new formal talks with the Post Office will follow informal discussions held privately earlier this week at the union's request. The union suggested a joint working party, chaired by an independent outsider.

## Major still sore over six of the best

Continued from page 1  
er discussed. It was not the sort of thing you talked about over the dinner table. My parents would not have been angry with the school.

"They were cross if we were caned because it meant we had misbehaved at school. Discipline was a strong point with them. I must have been naughtyer than John because I was caned twice for talking to girls in the classroom. I deserved it."

"I don't think caning ever hurt anyone. But I might be more old-fashioned than my younger brother."

Penny Junor, who wrote an authorised biography of John Major, said last night: "He told me he is still indignant about that beating. It did not seem fair. He had to walk a long way to get to that homework assignment on an industrial estate."

"Then he had a journey of an hour-and-a-half back to his home in Brixton. Most of the boys did not think the trip was worth it. It explains why he is still sore about it. Particularly as it was a mass beating."

In her book, *The Major Enigma*, Ms Junor reported that Rutlish was the worst experience of the Prime Minister's life. "When he went back to Rutlish in 1991 for a special anniversary, he said he had no memory of the school at all — so deeply had he buried that period of his life he did not even recognise the building."

Peter Stokes, a pupil at the same time as Mr Major and now chairman of the Old



John Major's schooldays: one caning was enough for the future Prime Minister

Rutlishians Association, had only distant memories of the Prime Minister. "It was easier to remember the cane. If boys misbehaved that was how they were punished. Discipline was strong."

"People may have got the impression that the Prime Minister was educated in a poor inner-city school. Not a bit of it. It was a strict pseudo-public school. That may be why he hates the cane today."

But Mr Major has not always been so vigorously opposed to corporal punish-

ment. The Commons voting record shows that he was on the side of rightwingers in July 1986, when MPs came within one vote of keeping caning in state schools with parental consent. Since then, according to Tory sources, he has changed his mind.

Gillian Shephard, who was rebuffed by Mr Major on Tuesday for suggesting that state schools might reintroduce the cane, was never beaten at school. She was converted to corporal punishment by her husband, Thom-

as, a retired headmaster who was known to resort to it.

In spite of their differences, Mr Major and Mrs Shephard put on a display of unity to mark the publication of the Education Bill yesterday. They arrived together for a tour of Cardinal Vaughan School in Kensington during which the Mr Major constantly referred to his Education Secretary as Gill. He even presented her with a golden delicious, declaring: "An apple for the teacher."

## Major to increase pressure on Sinn Fein

By Nicholas Watt

JOHN Major is increasing pressure on ministers and the Irish Government to force the IRA to meet tougher conditions before Sinn Fein leaders are allowed into Northern Ireland multi-party talks.

The Prime Minister is pressing for terrorists to be forced to follow stricter rules in the wake of an IRA ceasefire. Ministers have said that, before Sinn Fein is admitted to talks, there must be a credible IRA ceasefire but have not previously listed any specific conditions.

Among the tougher demands being considered by ministers are that there must be clear evidence of an end to terrorist training, manufacture of bomb-making equipment and targeting of individuals and buildings.

The moves come amid intelligence reports that suggest the IRA is making detailed preparations for a series of attacks on security bases and high profile individuals along Northern Ireland's affluent "gold coast" in North Down, near Belfast.

The information indicates that a known IRA terrorist has organised a series of "dummy runs" against RUC and Army bases in North Down.

## Review of hunting with dogs launched

By Michael Hornsby

THE first major review of hunting with hounds in 45 years was launched yesterday by Sir David Steel, executive chairman of the Countryside Movement, said it would take into account changes in the management of the countryside and in public opinion.

The former Liberal leader said he hoped the report would contribute to an informed debate if a Labour Government allowed a free vote on fox-hunting. The review team will include Richard Phelps, a retired public administrator and former Treasury mandarin, and William Allen, Professor of Equine Reproduction at Cambridge University.

The Scott Henderson report of 1951 concluded that hunting should continue because it was an effective means of keeping down foxes and was less cruel than most other methods. The Countryside Movement, set up last year, claims to speak broadly for rural interests but insists it is not running a pro-hunting campaign as such.

The League Against Cruel Sports said: "We have severe doubts that something set up by the Countryside Movement would be completely independent."

## Ban on handguns goes too far, senior Tory MPs tell Howard

By James Landale

A DEPUTATION of about 15 senior Tory MPs who believe that government moves to ban most handguns go too far yesterday urged the Home Secretary to offer gun-owners more compensation.

As the campaign by some Tories to water down the proposals began, the MPs told Michael Howard of their anger at the Firearms Bill which will be published tomorrow. In a "tense but organised" meeting at the House of

Commons, the MPs, led by Sir Jerry Wiggin, MP for Weston-super-Mare, told Mr Howard that the ban on all handguns except 22 small calibre sports pistols was excessive.

Sir Jerry said they had told Mr Howard that he was wrong to have gone beyond the proposals of the Cullen inquiry, set up after the Dunblane massacre. The MPs demanded that compensation be "generous and full". Gun owners, traders and club organisers must be compensated not just for their unus-

able weapons but also for their redundant equipment, loss of earnings, and for the costs involved with the closure of clubs.

The MPs also pressed Mr Howard to explain the situation over muzzle-loading and antique pistols — often held for historical reasons and not for use. Mr Howard was also questioned about the suggestion that all expanding ammunition must be banned. The MPs said that expanding ammunition would still be needed for vermin control.

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## Fertility authority agrees to take fresh look at widow's plea

# Review gives new hope to woman fighting for dead husband's baby

By Emma Wilkins and James Landale

A WIDOW who is fighting for the right to have her late husband's baby was cautiously optimistic yesterday that she might be allowed to take his sperm abroad for fertilisation treatment.

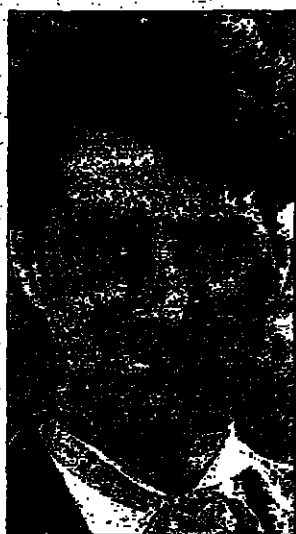
Diane Blood, 30, whose husband Stephen died of bacterial meningitis last year, said she was delighted after the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority announced it was to reconsider her case. But Mrs Blood, who lost her High Court action for the right to her husband's sperm earlier this month, emphasised that her hopes had been raised and dashed so many times that she could not bear to be disappointed again.

"I have been through hell in the last 18 months so to knock my feelings back now would be the cruellest blow of all," she said. "I am happy that the HFEA has decided to look at my individual circumstances. I am cautiously hopeful, although my feelings have been pulled around many times before."

Mrs Blood, from Worksop, Nottinghamshire, is ready to pay the cost of private treatment at a fertility clinic in Belgium if the HFEA decides that she can take her husband's sperm abroad. "I will be off to Belgium like a shot," she said.

She said the first decision 18 months ago had been taken without looking into the background of the case. All the authority had known was that a wife was asking to use her late husband's sperm without written consent.

"They didn't know that I believed I was pregnant when Stephen died or that we'd discussed the issue and he'd agreed to the posthumous use of his sperm. The fact that



Stephen Blood: wanted children

they've asked for my evidence from the court case suggests to me that they want to look at the individual and unique circumstances of my case," she said. "It's very good news — but it's not a victory."

The HFEA is bound by the 1990 Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act to disallow the use of sperm in Britain unless the donor has given his written consent. But in cases where sperm is to be exported or imported, the HFEA has discretionary powers.

The HFEA, which will consider the case next month, said: "The authority has the discretion to change its mind in cases of export or import. It wants to ensure that no stone is left unturned so this can be resolved sooner rather than later."

The couple, who were desperate for a child, married in 1991 with a service in accordance with the traditional 1662 Book of Common Prayer

which places special emphasis on the conception of children as the purpose of marriage.

After the High Court ruled that the HFEA had not behaved unlawfully in banning Mrs Blood from taking her husband's sperm abroad, a powerful cross-bench alliance of peers led by fertility experts Lord Winston and Baroness Warnock called for a change in the law. During a House of Commons debate yesterday into the issues raised by Mrs Blood's case, Joe Ashton — her local MP — said the law was beginning to look like an ass.

"It is not fair or reasonable under any law, under any circumstances — moral, legal or otherwise — that this woman should be denied the right to have a child by her husband. Really the law begins to look like an ass."

But David Alton (Liberal Democrat) argued that a child should have two parents wherever possible. "To treat a father simply as a source of genetic material is to ignore the strong interests of children in forming relationships with those who bring them into being." Conservative, Dame Jill Knight insisted the interests of children had to be paramount and warned that for a child "to have to take on board the fact that he was born from a dead man would be enough to occasion nightmares."

Mrs Blood, who is taking her case to the Appeal Court, thanked the public for their moral and financial support. She is appealing for funds to help cover her legal costs estimated at £100,000.

□ The Stephen Blood Baby Appeal, which has so far raised £20,000, can be reached on 0121 643 4636.



Diane Blood: cautiously optimistic that she will be allowed to take her late husband's sperm abroad. "It's good news but not a victory," she said yesterday

## Tips on spotting a winner still can't guarantee the gift horse

By Nigel Hawkes, science editor, and Lin Jenkins

AFTER many hours at the racetrack, two Australian scientists believe they know how to spot a loser.

Instead of gazing vaguely at the horses as they parade before a race, they urge punters to concentrate on six characteristics to avoid putting their money on duds.

Dr Geoff Hutson, an animal behaviourist from the University of Melbourne, and Marie Haskell, a PhD student, spent 20 months studying the appearance and behaviour of 867 horses in 67 races at two Melbourne racetracks.

They gave each horse a score based on 29 variables. *New Scientist* reports. Of those, 19 were based on the horse's appearance and behaviour, and the rest on more traditional sources such as the formbook, the jockey, the horse's age and sex, and the odds being offered. "We reckon we have six variables that will help a punter to recognise a loser," Dr Hutson says. "In other words, you can narrow down the field, thereby increasing your chances of finding a winner. If you could eliminate enough horses, you could bet on the field and come out on top."

Some of the six variables are obvious: horses at long odds, or those heavily handicapped in the weights, are likely losers. But the other four are more subtle.

One is the angle of the horse's head, which should be about 45 degrees. Another is how firmly the stable lad has to hold the horse when it is in the parade ring: the ideal to look for is a horse that needs to be only loosely held.

Any horse that requires handling by course stewards before it will enter the starting gate is bad news, says Dr Hutson, and so is any horse that has any bandages on it. They may conceal an injury. "If you spotted a horse with a combination of these variables, then I'd go straight to the bar rather than the bookie," he told *New Scientist*.

During the study, he says, two thirds of the horses they

picked as losers duly lost. "In general, the more relaxed the racehorse, the more chance it had of winning," he concludes.

Next Tuesday is Melbourne Cup day, when the whole of Australia stops for the running of the big race. Dr Hutson's tip this year is the Irish St Leger winner Oscar Schindler. "Its condition looked perfect on television," he says. "But if it acts up in the paddock then I might change my mind."

The racing fraternity is, unsurprisingly, sceptical about the research. Years of trial and error have failed to produce any foolproof method of determining which horses will win and which will lose. Were it so easy the sport would collapse.

The Animal Health Trust in Newmarket, which is at the forefront of research into horses' health and behaviour, said: "There are so many factors that determine the condition and wellbeing of a horse that even if every horse was given a complete veterinary examination using the latest modern equipment before the race, while you might eliminate a few horses from your list, the bookmakers would still probably end up taking home more money than the vets."

Graham Sharpe, of the bookmakers William Hill, said his profession was more interested in discovering which horse would win rather than which would not. "This is not much of a breakthrough in the battle between the punters and the bookmakers."

"If they could tell us which of the field apart from one is going to lose we would very soon go skint. Congratulations on spending money on finding out what most punters know already — on the basis of the form, the odds and how they look in the paddock they are not going to win."

He said that the research was not the answer to punters' prayers. "Horses are very capable of surprising people. No-hoppers may well thumb their noses at the researchers."

Racing, page 43

## School fined for expulsion errors

By John O'Leary, education editor

A SCHOOL has been ordered to pay £300 to the family of a teenage girl who was expelled for a vicious attack on a fellow pupil because of errors made during the expulsion process.

The girl and fellow pupil, both aged 15, were ordered to leave Noel Baker Community School in Alston, Derbyshire, after the head teacher discovered that they had punched and kicked a third girl. The attackers were expelled in February but both sets of parents lodged appeals against the decision.

Although separate appeal hearings upheld the expulsions, the family of one girl complained that the hearing had not been conducted properly. Patricia Thomas, the education ombudsman for the north of England, has ruled in her favour and ordered the £300 payment.

Mrs Thomas found a number of faults in the appeals procedure, including the absence of a clerk and the holding of a hearing in the school. She concluded that the failings were sufficiently serious to render the hearing invalid, although both girls

responsible have now moved to other schools. The school, which has 1,225 pupils and lies on the outskirts of Derby, was praised by Ofsted inspectors last November. They described it as "a haven for pupils... a safe and orderly environment".

Geoff Wynne, the head teacher of the grant-maintained school, said the victim of the attack suffered cuts and bruises and had to be taken to hospital. "I think the two girls who were responsible can count themselves extremely lucky the consequences were not more serious," he said. "I decided they should be expelled because I wanted to send a clear message this sort of behaviour is not acceptable."

Mr Wynne added: "When I first saw her report, I felt it was horrendous that a payment of £300 should be made to the family. I felt it was wrong that the money should be paid. The panel are lay people who do their best to help the school but you have to view this dispassionately. When you make a mistake you have to take your medicine."

## Nuns win fight to keep convent dry

By Paul Wilkinson

A COMMUNITY of nuns yesterday thwarted a property developer who wanted a licence to serve alcohol in their former convent.

They persuaded magistrates not to grant a drinks licence for their former home, part of which has been converted into a banqueting suite. The sisters now live in a retreat in the convent grounds.

Mother Robina and the nine sisters from the tiny community of St Peter in Horbury near Wakefield, west Yorkshire, believed their listed Victorian convent was to be used for educational purposes when they sold the building in 1993 for £440, and three acres of ground for £265,000, to John Kirby, a local businessman.

Part of the building was already occupied by St Hilda's prep school, but yesterday Mother Robina told Wakefield Licensing Justices that she was shocked when Mr Kirby, a governor of the school, sought a licence for special events on an upper floor.

She said afterwards: "We are so pleased, this must be divine intervention. All the sisters went into the chapel to

pray this morning at 10am just as the case was about to start. There has been a tremendous amount of praying over this. We hope this is the end of the matter, but if he comes back again, we are quite prepared to return to court."

The hearing was told that the Church of England order, which in the 1930s had more than 70 members, had faced a financial crisis. It was sold through one of Mr Kirby's companies to a trust which allowed another of his firms to administer it. The developer told the hearing that the building was in decline when he bought it, and he had spent £500,000 on renovation.

Two years ago the nuns successfully opposed his first application for a drinks licence, but since then he has held about 50 functions. He obtained occasional licences for about a dozen of them.

After the decision, Robert Campbell, Mr Kirby's solicitor, said: "We are sad that the local people did not appreciate that this could be of benefit for their community. At this stage there are no plans for an appeal or a new application."

## High time to find a masterpiece

By John Shaw

A VICTORIAN painting worth up to £180,000 has been found at a country house in Suffolk, 80 years after the art market lost trace of it.

John Vest, managing director of a saleroom in Newmarket, was doing a routine probate valuation when he spotted the painting — *Cleobulus instructing his daughter Cleobulina* by Frederic, Lord Leighton — hung high in a lofty hall.

He said: "I saw this picture out of the corner of my eye at first. I assumed it would be a print but when I had a closer look, I got a real tingle of excitement."

The classical painting, measuring 2ft 11in by 3ft 3in, was one of three exhibited by the artist at the Royal Acad-



The "lost" painting, valued at up to £180,000

my 1871 summer exhibition, to critical success. Its whereabouts have been unknown since 1916. The catalogue for the Leighton centenary exhibition at The Royal Academy in Piccadilly, seen by 118,000 people between February and April this year, described the study as "untraced".

Mr Vest discussed the discovery with executors for the

estate, and decided the painting should be sold through Sotheby's in its major Victorian picture auction in London on November 6. The family wish to remain anonymous.

They always believed the study to be a Leighton, but had no idea of its potential auction value. Sotheby's estimated it to be £120,000 to £180,000. Martin Gallon,

Sotheby's specialist, said: "The discovery of this virtually unknown work is particularly important as it is from a rich and intriguing phase of Lord Leighton's career."

Leighton had a passion for the history and literature of ancient Greece. Cleobulus was a teacher and a philosopher who became one of the seven wise men of Greece in 560BC. His daughter was renowned for her knowledge, and the painter imagined them together in a house based on the interior of his own home on Lidos. Leighton later used the divan in the design of a seat at Leighton House, Kensington.

By coincidence, the sale also includes a black and white chalk drawing for the painting. It has come from another owner and is estimated at £800 to £1,200.

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# Ineffective teaching verdict on troubled school sparks row

By JOHN O'LEARY, EDUCATION EDITOR

CHRIS Woodhead, the Chief Inspector of Schools, was at the centre of a furious row last night after claims that he had prejudged the findings of an emergency inspection of the school where teachers are threatening to strike unless 60 pupils are expelled.

The Institute of Directors' Surrey Downs branch issued an account of a breakfast meeting at which Mr Woodhead was asked about The Ridings School, in Halifax, west Yorkshire. He was said to have replied that though inspectors had been in the school for only a day, they had already found that "the kids are bored out of their minds because the teachers are not teaching them effectively".

Mr Woodhead insisted that his remarks referred to the general state of schools where discipline had broken down, and not to The Ridings specifically. But Clare Walker, the branch's press officer and director of a public relations company, said that she had a note of the meeting and had cleared the contents of the release with her chairman.

Nigel de Gruchy, general secretary of the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers, who will announce the result

Teachers at Manton Junior School went on indefinite strike yesterday as governors, local education chiefs and parents began a series of crisis meetings to try to resolve the dispute over ten-year-old Matthew Wilson. Eight of the nine teaching staff, all members of the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers, hope their action will persuade Matthew's mother, Pamela Cliffe, to send him to another school.

of a strike ballot among his members at the school today, accused Mr Woodhead of acting irresponsibly. "This is outrageously premature and a gross breach of confidence, which is profoundly unhelpful in the circumstances."

Mr de Gruchy said that behaviour problems at the school had made it difficult to teach, well, but the staff remained committed. "The comments are unjustified and this is a disastrous way of conducting a high-profile inspection."

The two-day inspection, led by Mike Tomlinson, Mr Woodhead's deputy, was ordered by Gillian Shephard,

the Education and Employment Secretary. The findings are expected to be published within a fortnight.

Mr Woodhead's remarks were made to an audience of about a hundred directors and head teachers at a hotel in Croydon. Ms Walker said last night: "I was surprised by what he said and consulted my chairman before issuing the release, but my notes make it quite clear that he was referring to The Ridings."

An Olsed spokesman said it was likely that Mr Woodhead would have received a preliminary report of the first day's inspection, but no conclusions would be drawn before the end of the exercise and no comment made in advance of publication. "The directors must have misunderstood what was being said."

The Calderdale education authority named a new head teacher for The Ridings this week after the resignation of Karen Stansfield, who said the job had exhausted her. The appointment was part of a package of measures to improve discipline at the school, but teachers are continuing to demand mass expulsions.

Leading article and Letters, page 21

## Sermon on humility wins prize for best preacher

By RUTH GLEDHILL, RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

FATHER William Anderson, a priest from Aberdeen, was yesterday named Preacher of the Year after a two-hour service at Southwark Cathedral.

Fr Anderson, 65, Canon of St Mary's Cathedral, was "astounded" to be chosen over four other preachers to win the award, organised by the College of Preachers and sponsored by The Times. His sermon was based on Psalm 51: "The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit: a broken and contrite heart. O God, shalt thou not despise."

Afterwards Fr Anderson, the only Roman Catholic to reach the shortlist of 30, from the total entry of 250, said: "I am amazed. I didn't think my sermon was particularly good."

"I think I preached better in the bathroom this morning. This was a daunting environment and a daunting congregation."

The Rt Rev Michael Turnbull, Bishop of Durham, who chaired the judges said that it was a majority decision. "Fr Anderson spoke to the human condition at a deep level, at a personal



Father William Anderson at Southwark Cathedral yesterday where he was named Preacher of the Year

level and at one applicable to the community."

John Gunmer, the Environment Secretary, who was on the judging panel, said: "Fr Anderson was preaching about humility and there was a humility about him. Yet it was the humility of a man who was immensely well-read. He was a remarkable preacher and as the first

to preach, he had a particularly difficult point at which to preach."

In his sermon, Fr Anderson said: "The battle goes on, in all of us, between pride and humility, and the lines can be blurred at times, the vice seeming almost to be the virtue." An Anglican friend had remarked to him recently: "Yes, I do so admire

humility—in other people." Fr Anderson continued: "The battering ram of God's insistent love alone will crush our underlying pride."

The other four preachers were: the Rev Christopher Burkitt, vicar of St Mary Whitegate and St Peter Little Budworth, Cheshire; Dr Arnold Kellert, a Methodist lay preacher from Knaresbor-

ough, Yorkshire; Anne Pest, an Anglican lay reader from Hertfordshire; and the Rev Bernard Thomas, 50, a priest with the Church in Wales who cares for a remote community in the South Wales valleys.

The 30 shortlisted sermons were published yesterday in *The Times Best Sermons of 1996* (Cassell, £9.99).

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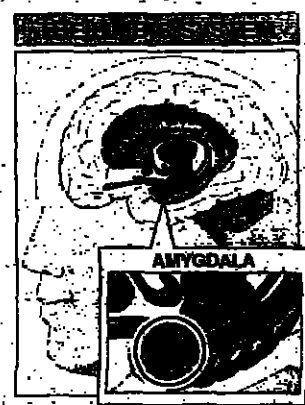
## Looking frightened makes everyone else feel scared too

By NIGEL HAWKES

THE sight of fear in another person's face instinctively leads the brain to prepare for action, scientists have found.

A primitive structure in the left temporal lobe, the amygdala, is activated more strongly by a fearful face than by a happy one, according to Professor Ray Dolan, of the Wellcome Department of Cognitive Neurology in Queen Square, London, who with colleagues reports the finding in *Nature*.

He says that the response is built into the brain from birth, and its origin is lost deep in evolution: "It is hard-wired, and innate. The sight of fear induces fear automatically, without any need to think. When we see fear in another person's face, it tells us to act quickly. We have found that it then communicates the signal to the front part of the brain



that is involved in preparing to act.

The team, including scientists from St Andrew's University, the Medical Research Council's Applied Psychology Unit in Cambridge, and the School of Medicine at the Royal Free and University College Hospitals in London, showed volunteers a series of

photographs of faces. The expressions had been modified by the technique of "morphing" to create a graduated series of fearful and happy faces. The volunteers were not told the real purpose of the experiment, but were simply asked to identify the gender of the face in each image. While they did so, an imaging system—positron emission tomography—measuring blood flow to see which part of the brain was activated.

This showed that the left amygdala was the key region, and that its response was greater to fearful faces than to happy ones. "The response occurred even when subjects were not consciously attending to the expressions, which suggests that the brain's response to emotional influences is automatic and does not require conscious awareness," Professor Dolan says.

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Neighbours reported beatings but demoralised team ignored mother's threats to kill her son

## Family says social services failed to protect Rikki Neave

By JOANNA BALE

RIKKI NEAVE'S family said yesterday that they blamed Cambridgeshire Social Services for the boy's suffering at the hands of his cruel mother.

Rikki, six, was on the council's at-risk register but the team that was meant to monitor him closely was poorly managed, overworked and under-resourced.

After Neave, 28, was acquitted of killing her son but found guilty of cruelty yesterday Sandra Chesney, the boy's aunt, said: "This terrible tragedy could have been avoided if the professionals involved had carried out their duty that was expected of them. The family are calling for a public inquiry into the negligence of Cambridgeshire County Council to investigate why the law, which should have been there to protect Rikki, failed to do so."

Social workers failed to recognise that Rikki was being physically abused and ignored Neave's threat that she would kill her son unless he was taken into care.

Neave's abuse of Rikki was not secret, nor was it carried out behind closed doors at the scruffy terrace house on the Welland Estate near Peterborough. After his murder, horrific tales of what he suffered at the hands of his mother became evident and although social services say they were never aware of her worst excesses, neighbours say they reported them.

Rikki's absent father, Trevor Harvey, saw his son occasionally but said he never realised that Rikki was being abused.

Rikki was born on March 4, 1988, in March, Cambridgeshire. By the time he was three his father had left the family. Soon after that his mother married Dean Neave, whom Rikki grew to hate.

When he was four Rikki was dangled from a bridge over a river while Neave and a friend laughed at his terror. Neigh-



The rear of the house on the notorious Welland Estate where the Neaves lived

bours reported seeing him repeatedly shaken, kicked like a football and having washing-up liquid poured down his throat when he called her name. Neave hit one of her daughters so hard over the head with a hairbrush that it broke. Rikki was also kept away from school when the bruises to his head became too obvious. Neave also pressed hard between his finger joints which, according to the prosecution was "very painful but left no marks".

Although frightened of the dark, she would send him out alone late at night to fetch her drugs from dealers on the estate, dressed in only a T-shirt. Her dependence on amphetamines, which she injected daily, caused violent mood swings.

Despite all this, Rikki always professed his love for her, pathetically calling out: "I love you mummy".

When Neave arrived on the Welland Estate in March 1992 the Cambridgeshire social services east team was in complete disarray. The estate is among the worst deprived in the county. One-parent families living on state benefit, drugs and children on the at-risk register are common problems. A crucial file on Neave's background was lost, tension among social services colleagues was rife, and the staff turnover was high.

For the last three months of his life Rikki's social worker was Debbie Lawson. She said: "It became increasingly clear that the problems within the east team were affecting the management of this case. I believe that only a thorough independent and public inquiry can bring all the facts into the open."

Ms Lawson complained to her bosses soon after taking over Rikki's case that her workload was too big. Police sources said they were "appalled" to discover that Neave gave Ms Lawson a copy of her manuscript *The Perfect Murder* about someone who gets away with murder, but she left it in the back of her car, too busy to read it for several weeks.

Several unqualified social workers also called on the Neaves. One social services source said: "Ruth could be physically violent and on one occasion punched the wall by

the side of a social worker's face, but social workers will tell you that that doesn't always translate into violence with kids. People are always asking us to take their kids into care and making threats. If we took them all, our children's homes would be bursting."

Despite numerous case and family conferences, at no time did social workers conclude that Rikki should be taken

away from his mother. His repeated bruises and cuts were explained away by Neave as simple childhood accidents. These lies were believed, even though she was sometimes violent towards case workers.

A social services source said: "Ruth always had an explanation. She would say that he had fallen down the stairs or walked into a table. We seemed to take her word

too easily. Had one person gone in and taken charge of things, it would have been different. Ruth had been known to us for more than 20 years and it was well-documented as to what she was like as a teenager. On a number of different occasions we had enough to take Rikki into care."

Ted Unsworth, director designate of Cambridgeshire Social Services, said: "Social Services staff were working to a care plan aimed at protecting the children and supporting the family as a whole, and normal decision-making processes were followed. I believe, with hindsight, we persisted for too long with a strategy in line with the principles in the Children Act 1989, which was designed to keep the family together."

Demands for a public inquiry were backed by the social workers union Unison, which said that it had been raising concerns about the east team in Peterborough since 1992.



Neave, whose mother feared she would grow up unable to show love to a child



Harvey, absent father who did not suspect

## Disturbed child was victim of a troubled family

By JOANNA BALE

RUTH NEAVE had been known to social services for most of her life as the victim of a troubled family.

Her father, Alex Greig, was confined to a wheelchair with motor neurone disease and her mother Anne had anorexia nervosa. The Greigs' other child, Mark, was born blind. Four years ago, Mr and Mrs Greig killed themselves.

Neave, 28, was taken into care at the age of two, a seriously disturbed child prone to screaming fits. Despite this and the fact that her parents attempted suicide together a month later, she was allowed back to the family home in Lewisham, southeast London, as was her brother.

For the next two years she was in and out of local authority care, showing disturbed behaviour and signs of having been physically ill-treated. At the age of four she was taken into long-term care at the request of her mother, who feared that like herself, Ruth would grow up unable to show the love and responsibility necessary to bring up a child. Neave stayed with foster parents and in children's homes in Cambridgeshire.

She saw her parents irregularly and did not attend their funeral, after they committed suicide, using painkillers, at their home near Cambridge.

When she was a teenager, Neave would play truant from school, absconding with

friends to get drunk, and specialists diagnosed her as being an "inadequate psychopath". She received treatment.

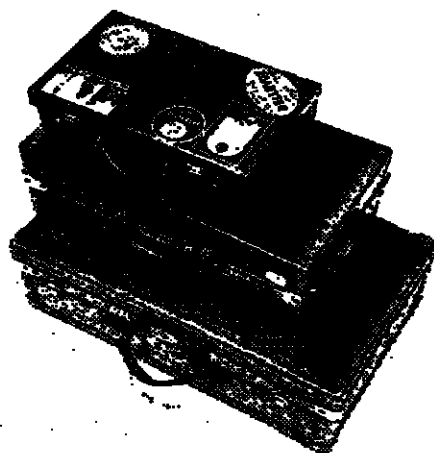
Inadequate psychopathy normally develops over a long period, quite often from adverse experiences in childhood. The expression usually implies anti-social, very disturbed behaviour, possibly with connotations based on a lack of feelings towards others. The term "inadequate", when attached to "psychopath", usually denotes emotional immaturity and difficulty with social relationships.

Neave has been in trouble with the police several times in the past for minor offences. At the age of 15 she was sent to the secure unit at an assessment centre in Peterborough. She behaved aggressively, and staff once had to wrestle a pair of scissors from her.

Neave's son, Rikki, was put on the at-risk register in April 1994 at his mother's request a year after she first asked for him to be taken into care. She had threatened to kill him unless something was done because she could not cope with his behaviour, which was caused by her own violence towards him.

Rikki had been taken into care on several occasions to give Neave a break, often when she wanted a weekend alone with his stepfather, Dean. They married while he was in prison in 1991.

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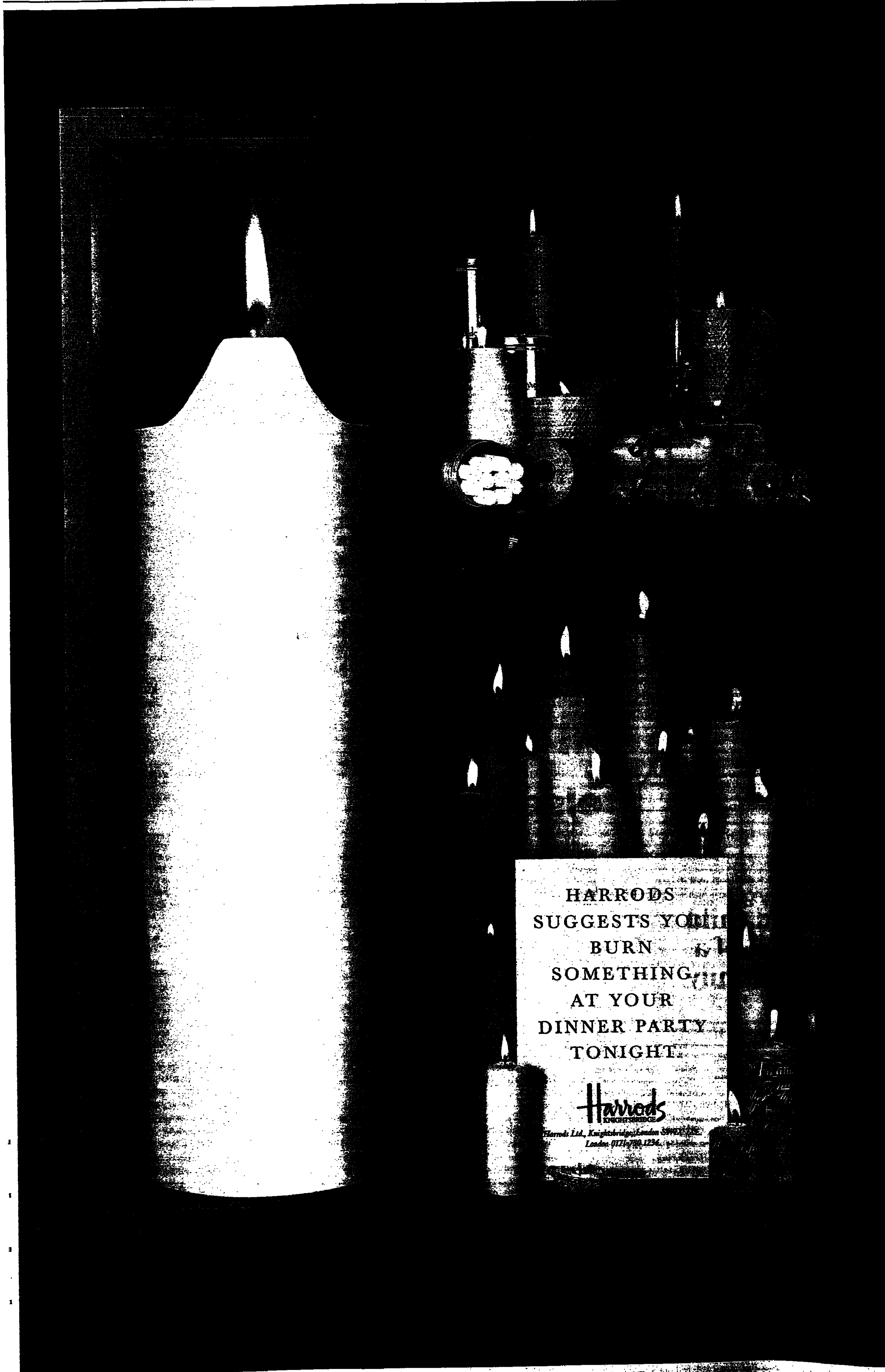
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Shake-up will mean households can shop around for clean energy, MPs say

## Green power choice for consumers

By NICK NUTTALL  
ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

PEOPLE in British cities will soon be able to choose between electricity from wind turbines in Wales or small hydroelectric schemes in Scotland or the West Country, it emerged yesterday.

Liberalisation of the energy market in 1998 could dramatically increase the development of wind farms and other green energy schemes, MPs and environmentalists said at a conference organised by the Parliamentary Renewable and Sustainable Energy Group. Households will for the first time be able to choose the kind of generator that will provide their power.

Supermarkets, which recently an-

nounced they were diversifying into banking, are expected to become electricity companies selling power to homes. But Martin Alder, formerly of Wessex Water and a founder of the Renewable Energy Company, said that consumers would also be able to buy environmentally friendly energy from wind farms, from landfill gas-to-electricity schemes, small-scale hydroelectric projects and wood-power schemes.

Another company, Green Electron, already has a pilot project with Stroud Council in Gloucestershire in advance of the liberalisation of the market. The council's electricity needs have been calculated.

The company has matched this to a pool of green generators including a hydroelectric project run by the

monks at Buckfast Abbey in Devon. The council's contract with Green Electron, which is based in Bristol, covers payments to the power operators and the charges levied by the National Grid to distribute the electricity.

Mr Alder said that his company expected to supply homes with electricity at prices close to those offered by traditional but more polluting coal, oil and gas generators.

There has been a sharp fall in the cost of generating electricity from technologies such as wind turbines as more and more have come on stream in recent years. A survey released by the Parliamentary energy group showed that 21 per cent of people — about four million households — were prepared to pay more

for electricity if it was generated in an environmentally friendly way.

They said they were prepared to pay on average an extra £64 a year to reduce pollution and the threat of global warming, although 65 per cent of the 1,000 people questioned by Mori said they would prefer to buy green-generated electricity but only if it cost no more than that generated by fossil fuels or nuclear power stations.

Frank Cook, MP, chairman of the group, said: "The British people do not want the lowest possible bills if it means more pollution and global warming. They want a green energy future and, if necessary, they are ready to pay for it."

About 2 per cent of Britain's electricity is at present generated by renewable energies. The Labour

Party has promised to increase that to 10 per cent by 2010. Mr Alder said his greatest concern was that so many people would be eager to sign green electricity contracts, there would initially not be enough produced.

Supporters believe green schemes that reduce not only carbon dioxide but also sulphur dioxide, nitrogen gases and other pollutants linked with smog and ill health should get tax incentives to reflect their impact on reducing costs, for example, to the NHS. That might help protect them from being driven to the wall after 1998. Some experts fear that the big generators may drive electricity prices so low that environmentally friendly schemes like wind power will be uncompetitive.

## Ministers salute the innovation that reduced pedestrian deaths

### The zebra crossing 45 today and still a lifesaver

By LIN JENKINS

THE zebra crossing, which spawned the panda and pelican and was even in at the birth of Tufty, today celebrates its forty-fifth anniversary. It remains the single most important measure in reducing the number of pedestrian deaths each year.

When it was introduced in Slough, Berkshire, there was only a tenth of the traffic now seen on the roads. Up until then pedestrian casualties were high because few motorists noticed, or bothered to notice, the existing crossings, which were marked by metal studs in the road. Those on foot could see them clearly but the motorist felt the familiar bumps only in the seconds before he or she collided with a pedestrian.

"Others things were tried but nothing had the visual impact that made the zebra crossing so successful," Graham Goodwin, of the Transport Department, said.

The familiar amber globes of the Belisha beacon, the brainchild of Leslie Hore-Belisha, Transport Minister in 1934, were incorporated



The DoT four: Sir George Young leads his transport team of John Watts, John Bowis, and Lord Goschen safely across the road yesterday

from the zebra crossings' inception but the lollipop lady did not feature until 1954 and the passing of the School Crossing Patrol Act.

Transport Department statistics show that in 1926, when the car was not the common commodity of today, there were 4,866 deaths on the roads. Last year there were 3,621, about ten a day. In 1927 of those who died on the roads 2,774 were pedestrians, compared to 1,038 last year.

The cover of the Beatles' *Abbey Road* album ensured that the zebra crossing became immortalised. Tourists still stop the traffic as they strike the poses of the Fab Four to have their photograph taken on the crossing outside the Abbey Road recording studio in Maida Vale, north London.

Four transport ministers, led by Sir George Young, the Secretary of State, who marked the anniversary yesterday in similar vein,

stopped short of wearing the distinctive white suit like that worn by John Lennon, or taking their shoes off to mimic Paul McCartney. They also insisted on posing on the crossing near their Marsham Street offices in Westminster, rather than in Abbey Road.

The first attempt to modernise the zebra crossing failed. Panda crossings, where the road was marked in black and white triangles

and a push-button system activated a flashing amber light for motorists, were abandoned after a year in 1962.

The X crossing, where a white X told motorists they could proceed while a flashing green man told pedestrians it was safe to cross, was also found to be too confusing to drivers. In 1969 the pelican was devised using normal traffic lights.

However, because the zebra crossing is so flexible it

remains the most common form of crossing, with an estimated 11,000 in the United Kingdom.

One mother of six painted her own in 1972 to highlight the need for one at Darlington, Staffordshire, and was given a 12-month conditional discharge after being prosecuted under the Highways Act. Rag week students painted one across the M1 near Rotherham, South Yorkshire, in 1980 but were unpunished.

## Record manpower shortfall for Army

By MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

LABOUR accused the Government of "gross ministerial incompetence" yesterday after the latest official figures showed that the Army is short of 5,350 soldiers.

The record shortfall, announced by Nicholas Soames, the Armed Forces Minister, in a written answer to the House of Commons, indicates that the Army's manpower crisis has not been resolved despite heavy advertising and recruitment campaigns in the past 12 months.

A year ago the shortfall was 4,000 trained soldiers and 1,000 untrained soldiers. Since then, General Sir Michael Rose, the Adjutant General responsible for Army personnel, has mounted new recruiting drives to fill the gap. Yesterday's new figures

showed the overall shortage had risen by another 350.

A spokesman for the Army, however, said overall recruitment was up 35 per cent on last year. The pass rate for all recruits after attending initial training was also up 15 per cent on the same period.

Nevertheless, the latest figures indicate that the Army has failed to retain enough trained soldiers. By April 1 next year, the trained strength of the Army will have dropped to 101,000, including the Gurkha regiments, compared to the requirement of 104,000, Mr Soames said.

David Clark, the Shadow Defence Secretary, said: "It beggars belief that ministers have overseen such gross incompetence."

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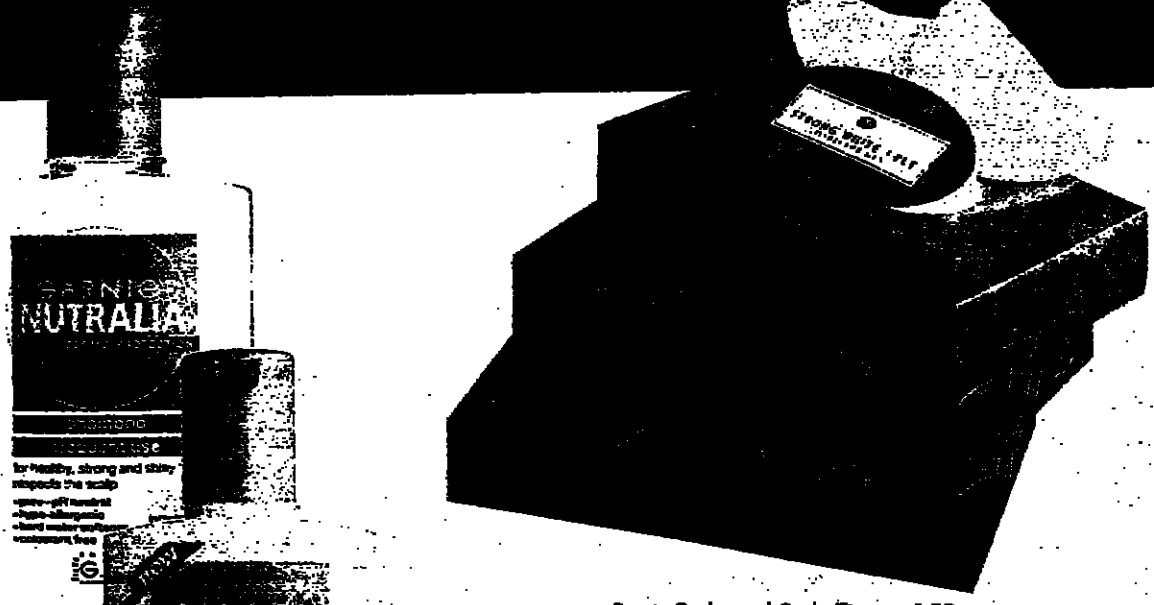
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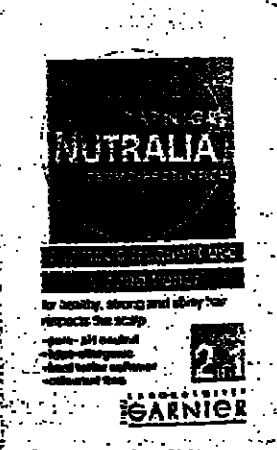
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**BY DAMIAN WHITWORTH**

Raymond Chandler was also well remembered for his sporting prowess, excelling both at rugby and on the cricket field. In later life, he said he was able to write American detective stories only because he had a solid education in the classics at an English public school.



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**By JAMES LANDALE, POLITICAL REPORTER**

□ The German airline Lufthansa has put back a publicity launch in London scheduled for 11am on Armistice Day to 11.15 that day after protests from British war veterans.

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# 'Outrageous' Tory bias must end, say Labour peers

BY ALICE THOMSON, POLITICAL REPORTER

HEREDITARY peers saved the Government from defeat 66 times in the past year, Labour said yesterday in a new attack on Tory bias in the House of Lords.

Lord Richard, Shadow Leader of the Lords, said that the figures proved that there was an urgent need for reform. "I think this bias is politically unfair. I think it's constitutionally outrageous. I think it's historically anachronistic, and I think it has to be put right."

Labour has pledged to abolish the rights of hereditary peers to sit and vote in the Lords and in the long term it is considering the setting up of an elected upper chamber. Their analysis shows that, out of 106 votes in the Lords in the last parliamentary session, the Government suffered only ten defeats. But more than two thirds of their victories were achieved with the help of hereditary peers.

In some cases the Tories were "ferrying peers in from their estates" to help to win a vote, Labour said. Some peers had hardly ever been in the Lords except in times of crisis, and even the longest serving clerks could not recognise them.

"The Tory working peers are bad enough at attending," Lord Richard said. "We know the Government is in crisis

when Lord Forte and Lord Hanson make a rare appearance and the Government is trying to avert a catastrophe when we see Lord Moore in the House. But when the long lost hereditaries arrive, we know we are likely to lose."

There are 466 Tory peers, 33 more than when Margaret Thatcher came to power in 1979. In that time Labour's strength has fallen by 28 to 111.

The Labour benches have 15 hereditary peers, the Liberal Democrats have 24, the cross benches have 192 and the Tories have 320. Lord Richard said that on their past record the Tory hereditaries would try to thwart as much of Labour policy as they could. The last Labour government suffered an average 67 defeats a year.

"This demonstrates the outrageous advantages enjoyed by the Conservative Party in the House of Lords, whether in government or in opposition," he said. He highlighted several of the most controversial votes last year which were won by the Government only after the hereditary peers were whipped.

They included an amendment to prevent the Ministry of Defence from selling off the married quarters estates. After a three-line whip the Government managed to prevent the amendment by 256

votes to 176. Without the hereditary peers it would have lost.

"They won regardless of the merits of their arguments," Lord Richard said. "Some of their peers didn't even listen to all the debates before voting."

He promised that the next Labour government would introduce a Bill to change the composition of the Lords, and warned hereditary peers that they would find it difficult to prevent their dismissal.

Under the Salisbury Convention, the Lords do not vote down any Government's election manifesto commitments. Lord Richard said: "They would be mad to overturn that and start using guerrilla tactics. It would provoke a major constitutional crisis."

Yesterday government sources ridiculed Labour's attempt to discredit hereditary peers on the basis of their voting record. A senior peer said: "In a house where the majority of peers are hereditaries it's hardly surprising that they affect the votes. The Government is not the least bit embarrassed of its hereditaries. They work very hard."

The reason Labour have lost out on working peers is because they went through a period in the 1980s when they refused to put up any names. So it is sheer hypocrisy to complain now."



Lord Taylor outside Parliament yesterday with his wife, Kathie, their children Laura, left, and Alexandra, and his mother, Enid

## Lords welcome the man Cheltenham rejected

BY ALICE THOMSON

JOHN TAYLOR became the first black Tory yesterday to take a seat in the Lords and said it was the "rainbow after the rain".

Four years ago he and his family suffered racial abuse after he was selected to stand as Tory parliamentary candidate in the party's Cheltenham stronghold. He had to cope with offensive letters and cartoons that circulated in the spa town and was defeated by the Liberal Democrats.

Yesterday Lord Taylor of Warwick

said that his introduction to the Lords had been as emotional as his wedding and the birth of his two daughters, Laura and Alexandra.

In his red robes and ermine, he soon had the measure of the oldest gentleman's club on the Thames. Peers from all sides shouted congratulations, the tea ladies knew his name and the barwoman was honoured to serve him. He had drinks with the Lord Chancellor but declined interviews with *Hellot* and the *Big Breakfast*.

At 43 Lord Taylor will be one of the youngest in the House and is already

dipped for front-bench job. A broadcaster and barrister, he wants to focus on morality, crime and education. "There is no point in using this place as a club to smoke cigars," he said. "It is inevitable that people will talk about me as a black role model but it is dangerous to call me their spokesman. Most blacks want the same as whites. I see myself as one of the emerging middle-class Afro-Saxons. We are not going back. We can contribute. I speak for the silent majority of blacks who aren't muggers."

He said he was stunned when he

was approached by the Prime Minister at a garden party in Downing Street. "He asked how I would feel if he made me a working peer. I said that would be tremendous, thinking it would happen in the next ten years. But he said, 'No, John, it's going to happen in the next few weeks'. I was gobsmacked."

He added: "My late father was a professional cricketer for Warwickshire in the Forties and Fifties and it was his ambition for me to play at Lord's — but I'm sure he would settle for this."

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## After-school clubs 'must pay their way'

BY JILL SHERMAN, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

LABOUR yesterday announced its after-school club scheme to help single parents into work, making clear that it would not be state-funded.

Harriet Harman, Shadow Social Security Secretary, said that the running costs would be paid by parents and employers, with help from the National Lottery. She refused to promise any state funding, despite claims from pressure groups that the clubs would need at least £250 million in start-up costs in the first five years of a Labour government.

Under Labour's scheme, parents would pay up to £25 a week for a child to be supervised in schools or playcentres until 5.30pm. Activities such as sport, art and drama would be provided.

Ms Harman said that the charges would be on a sliding scale, according to ability to pay. The clubs would be available to all families, but single parents might benefit

most because fewer were in work at present.

"After-school clubs give mothers extra time in which they can work. This is vital for lone mothers who often need to work more than school hours to be better off than on benefits," Ms Harman said. "They also re-create as closely as possible the opportunities that children used to have to 'play out' safely."

Yesterday the Kids' Club Network, which has set up 3,400 after-school clubs, said that a further 10,000 would cost at least £250 million over five years. This would provide only two clubs for every three primary schools.

**IN PARLIAMENT**

TODAY in the Commons: Treasury questions; questions to the Prime Minister; Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office Bill; all-ages basketball debate on British citizenship; in the Lords: Channel Tunnel Rail Link Bill, committee on recruitment; Regulations on open-ended investment companies.

## Straw takes new line on knife ban

BY RICHARD FORD

LABOUR conceded yesterday that there are difficulties in producing the legal definition of a combat knife needed to ban such weapons.

Jack Straw, the Shadow Home Secretary, accepts that a specific ban would have too many loopholes and is calling instead for a more comprehensive ban with a system of exemptions.

Michael Howard has promised that the Government will ban combat knives if a workable definition can be found. Mr Straw and Alex Carlile, the Liberal Democrat home affairs spokesman, have now written to him, suggesting the exemption system. They say: "The burden of proof that a knife or other weapon falls within an exemption would then lie on the defendant."

They also called for controls on mail-order sales of knives with names such as "Rambo sidearm" and the "Validator".

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## Magistrates' Association council divided over who should be elected to succeed outspoken leader JPs consider their verdict on law-and-order debate

By Frances Gibb  
LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

LEADERS of the 29,000 magistrates in England and Wales are at odds over who is to become their new spokesman, at a time that law and order has become central to political debate. The council of the Magistrates' Association is to vote next month on who should succeed Rosemary Thomson, the most outspoken leader of the magistracy in recent years. Mrs Thomson has increased the public prominence of the association, regularly appearing on radio and television with criticisms of government criminal justice policy where JPs have thought it would not work.

The contest is being keenly watched by Home Office officials, some of whom would prefer the magistracy to have a less troublesome spokesman in the run-up to the general election. David Baker, honorary treasurer of the association for the past five years, and Anne Fuller, the deputy chairman, are the contenders for the post.

The 110 members of the council are



David Baker. Age 64. Career (of 39 years) in building societies. Was educated at Wolstanton County Grammar School, Newcastle-under-Lyme, in Staffordshire. Is married with two children, and grandchildren. Mr Baker has been a JP since 1970; member of the council of the Magistrates' Association since 1984. He sat on the sentencing guidelines committees of the association, and on other committees with government departments. Mr Baker chairs the Somerset Magistrates' Courts Committee, which handles appointments of JPs. He is also a member of the local police authority.



Anne Fuller. Age 60. Career since 1958 as market research executive — now freelance. She is married with three children. BA Hons (English), University of London: law diploma in child protection and senior course in criminology. Mrs Fuller has been a JP since 1975, and a member of the council of the Magistrates' Association since 1984. Member of all council committees and various committees with government departments. Deputy chairman of youth and family panels on the Kingston upon Thames bench. National co-ordinator for the Magistrates in the Community Project, promoting and teaching people about the work that JPs do.

Thomson's individual style of leadership and her outspokenness should be followed by a period of "taking stock", as Mr Baker puts it.

All agree that Mrs Thomson will be a hard act to follow. Neither candidate would lead from the front as much as Mrs Thomson, and both would delegate to the association's committee chairmen more of the task of speaking on behalf of the organisation. They are both likely to give government an easier time.

Mrs Fuller said: "Our first priority is to speak up for magistrates and to present their policy. Where that is different from government policy, we would say so. But it is not our role to criticise the Government and its stand — our policy is that of our members. Once something has become law, we would uphold it."

Mr Baker said: "I am keen on consistency of sentencing and guidelines to improve that. But I am not for lay magistrates giving their point of view on imprisonment or otherwise — that is a matter for the legislators and it is for us to keep within the ambit of the legislation."

keeping their cards close to their chests. But there is much behind-the-scenes lobbying in what is likely to be a close-run vote. One JP said: "Everyone is in huddles — the knives are out."

One camp favours fewer media appearances and a return to the days when magistrates had a minimal role in public

debate. Some would like to see a man in the job — not wishing the association to have its third consecutive woman leader, and someone who is not from the South East. Mr Baker is from Torquay, while Mrs Fuller, like Mrs Thomson, is from the Home Counties.

However, there are also those who

want to build on Mrs Thomson's work and take it forward. Mrs Fuller, they argue, is best fitted to do this and should be elected, regardless of gender or constituency.

Mrs Thomson herself is believed to favour Mrs Fuller, a member of the Kingston upon Thames bench in south

London since 1975 and chairman of its youth panel and in charge of betting licensing. The two women have worked closely for the past three years.

But Mr Baker, who is chairman of Somerset and South Avon branch as well as of the Taunton Deane bench, is supported by those who argue that Mrs

## Students vote to boycott Bar scheme for trainee places

By Frances Gibb

BAR students have voted to boycott the profession's first clearing house scheme which they say has left more than 1,000 of them without first-round offers of trainee places in chambers.

The first offers under the new scheme went out to Bar students last week. Some 365 students have attracted all 850 offers available, leaving about 1,400 students in limbo.

At the same time, the pupils' applications clearing house (PACH) is having administrative teething problems. There are reports of chambers not having received students' applications, or students receiving three letters from chambers to which they had not even applied.

Students are supposed to wait until the first round of offers for training places (pu-

pillages) has been taken up, after which the Bar Council would provide a list of remaining vacancies. But that list will not be available until November 25.

Students at the Inns of Court school of law (the Bar School) have voted to draw up their own list of vacancies and make their own applications, "cutting the Bar Council out of the equation", as one put it.

The students are reluctant to be named, fearing it would prejudice their chances of a place. One said: "Basically the Bar Council seems more concerned about saving its clearing scheme than our chances of finding a training place. We are being treated as guinea-pigs." They have no confidence that the Bar Council will be able to provide a full list of vacancies after the muddles



A group of Bar students who are unhappy about the clearing house for trainees to find places in chambers. About 1,400 are in limbo

that have arisen. "The problem," one said, "is that they did not anticipate the huge number of applications there would be and the system just can't cope with it."

The Bar Council denied the system could not cope. Nigel Bastin, the Bar Council's head of education and training,

said: "By last week's deadline, there were 1,800 applications for 850 places. Within the week it was possible for us to turn around all the offers made by chambers to applicants in the first round."

The second round of offers had to be extended to give chambers time to work

through their shortlists, he added. After that, lists of places would be published and students would be free to approach chambers.

A Bar Council spokesman said it was not the solution for students to go "freelance". The new system was designed to be much fairer and to end the

old "law of the jungle" that prevailed, with students having to send off multiple applications and expending much time, money and effort in finding places.

He added: "It is easy to denounce the system on the basis of minimal teething problems but clearly if there

are any concerns they will be taken on board for next year." There was "huge demand" for the Bar which the profession could not restrict. "So this makes it all the more important to have some kind of systematic clearing house."

Law report, page 31

## Euro 96 headlines were in 'bad taste'

JINGOISTIC headlines about the German football team during Euro 96 were "offensive and in bad taste", the Press Complaints Commission has said.

The Commission received 300 complaints from the public. It said that headlines such as "Achtung Surrender — For You Fritz Ze European Championship Is Over" in the *Daily Mirror*, "Let's Blitz Fritz" in the *Sun* and "Herr We Go — Bring On The Krauts" in the *Daily Star* had "significantly... misjudged the public mood". But it said the headlines were "clearly not intended to incite prejudice directed at specific individuals on the ground of their race".

Members of the Commission agreed that there was no breach of the PCC's code on discrimination, but said they wanted to "place on record" their concern that editors had departed from a "proud tradition" of combining support for Britain's sportsmen and women with tolerance and fair play towards others.

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## Trial was 'parody of justice'

FROM JONATHAN MIRSKY  
IN HONG KONG

THERE was outrage across Hong Kong's political spectrum yesterday at the 11-year jail sentence imposed by a court in Peking on Wang Dan, the Chinese dissident.

Martin Lee, chairman of the Democratic Party, which holds the most seats in the Legislative Council, said: "This is bad news for the people of Hong Kong ... what Wang Dan has done is to say something which is the truth." Allen Lee, the Liberal Party chairman and member of the Peking-appointed Preparatory Committee for establishing the post-1997 government, said: "The sentence is too much."

Chris Patten, the Governor, said the crimes for which Wang had been sentenced were "activities which in most places, including Hong Kong, would be entirely legal".

Amnesty International described Wang's trial as a parody of justice. "It is clear that the verdict and the sentence against him had been decided in advance," the London-based group said.



Wang Dan, the Chinese dissident who was jailed for 11 years in Peking yesterday

## Leading Peking dissident Wang jailed for 11 years

FROM JAMES PRINGLE IN PEKING

WANG DAN, one of China's leading dissidents, was sentenced yesterday to 11 years' jail for conspiring to subvert the Communist Government. He is to appeal but observers said there was little likelihood of success.

Western diplomats said that with his conviction Peking had virtually crushed all political opposition at a time when Deng Xiaoping, 92, the paramount leader, lies ailing and the hardline Communist leadership has yet to grasp the reins of power. Wang, 27, a prominent student leader in the 1989 pro-democracy movement in Tiananmen Square which was brutally crushed by the authorities, has been an outspoken critic of human rights abuses in China.

Wang, who had served almost four years' jail for his role in the Tiananmen movement, continued to speak out for democracy on his release from jail in 1993. He campaigned for political change and tolerance, writing essays critical of the Government that were published abroad. He helped other dissidents in

financial difficulties and accepted aid from overseas groups. The diplomats added that the alleged crimes he was convicted for would, in most countries, be considered normal political activity. The heavy sentence was also likely to cause dismay in Hong Kong, which returns to Chinese rule next year. Besides the 11-year sentence, Wang was deprived of his political rights for a further two years, the Xinhua news agency said. It took the three-judge panel, led by Cai Yue, a woman,

less than four hours to convict Wang. Although she declared the trial was "open, fair and legitimate", a heavy police cordon prevented foreign journalists from approaching Peking's Number One Intermediate People's Court.

Foreign observers from the United States, Canada, Chile and France were also not permitted to attend the trial. The verdict was delivered after a half-hour deliberation. Judge Cai remained expressionless throughout, said the dissident's father, Wang Xi-

angzeng, who attended the trial with his wife and oldest daughter.

"Not one witness was summoned," he said. "The judge did not uphold the justice and dignity of the law ... how can writing articles constitute a crime?" he asked.

Judge Cai said Wang's writings showed that his aim was not merely to express his political views or voice opinions to the Government, as he had claimed, but were meant to mould public opinion for overthrowing the legitimate Government.

Xinhua alleged that Wang had colluded secretly with hostile overseas organisations, had slandered the Government and carried out activities aimed at endangering state security.

Later, Wang Xiangzeng said his son was innocent of any crime. "All that he has done was above board ... for China's democracy."

The Wang conviction is a slap in the face for Western governments that appealed to Peking to improve its human rights record, diplomats said.



Wang's parents head for court in Peking yesterday

## Argentine army chief to visit

BY MICHAEL EVANS  
DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

THE chief of the Argentine Army, who was held prisoner during the Falklands conflict in 1982, is due to arrive in Britain on Sunday for the highest-ranking official visit to London since the fighting.

The three-day visit of Lieutenant-General Martín Balza, Argentina's Chief of General Staff, is the latest and most significant official military contact between the two countries.

His visit, which will include a meeting with his British counterpart, General Sir Charles Guthrie, and a trip to Tidworth garrison in Hampshire, was announced yesterday as Rogelio Pflüger, Argentine Ambassador in London, appealed to the Government to lift the British arms embargo, which has been in place since 1982.

Señor Pflüger said: "We believe the arms embargo is unfair, and increasingly anachronistic, and we hope it will be lifted in time."

General Balza's visit follows allegations in a British television documentary that a former Argentine intelligence chief tried to acquire spare parts for Argentine naval frigates in breach of the embargo. Señor Pflüger denied the claims.

## Bribe case adds to Rao woes

FROM REUTERS  
IN DELHI

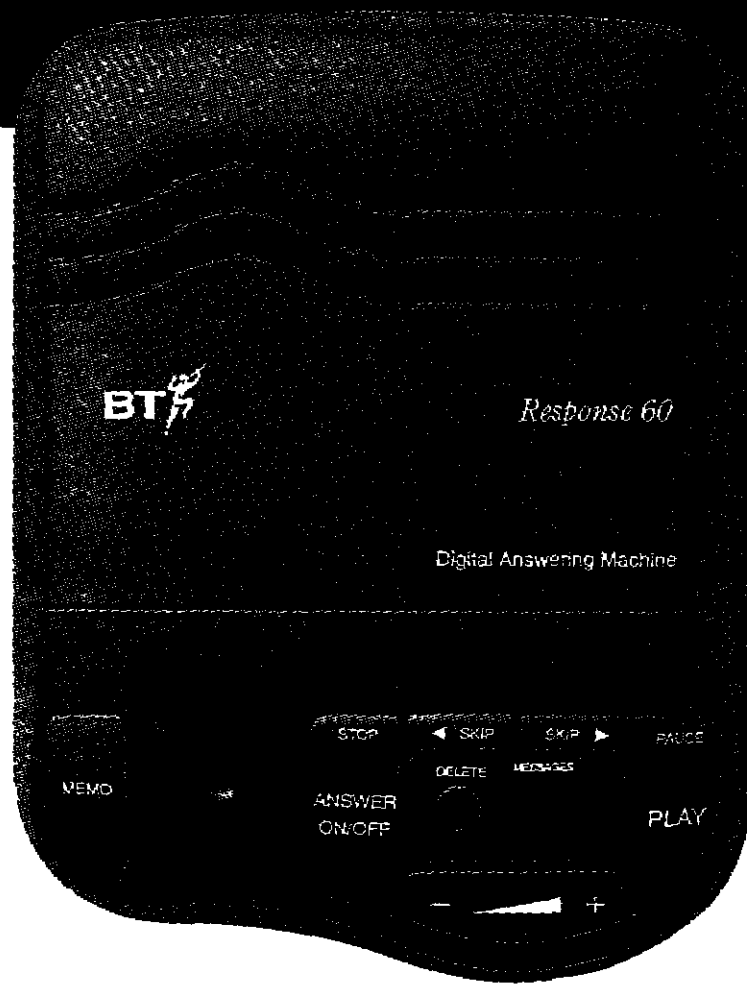
INDIAN police indicted P.V. Narasimha Rao, the former Prime Minister, yesterday in a vote-buying case, hours after he appeared in court on forgery charges.

The indictment for bribery and the court appearance have clouded the legacy of the man who opened the nation's economy to foreign investment and trade. The Central Bureau of Investigation said it charged Mr Rao with conspiring to pay MPs from a regional party £62,000 to vote against a 1993 no-confidence motion, which Mr Rao's Congress Party narrowly won.

The bribery charges were also filed against two other Congress members, as well as four members of the regional Jharkhand Mukti Morcha Party. The former Prime Minister and his colleagues have denied any wrongdoing.

After weeks of legal manoeuvring, Mr Rao yesterday became the first former or serving Prime Minister to appear in court on criminal charges. He has denied claims that while he was Foreign Minister in 1989 he had the Indian consulate in New York authenticate what he knew were false documents aimed at defaming a political opponent.

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The Independent Television Commission (ITC) is inviting applications for four licences to provide digital terrestrial television multiplex services. The licences are for those multiplexes other than the two which will carry the services of the BBC, Channels 3 and 4 and Teletext Ltd.

The licences, if granted, will be for a term of 12 years and will be awarded in accordance with the terms of the Broadcasting Act 1996.

Licensees will be authorised to broadcast those digital programme services and digital additional services which are themselves separately licensed. In the case of Multiplex A some capacity is reserved for Channel 5 and S4C Digital services. Services will be expected to be on-air, subject to international frequency clearances, not later than 1 July 1998.

The Invitation to Apply specifying the terms and conditions relating to the provision of digital terrestrial television multiplex services together with a draft licence, and supplementary documents including Guidance Notes for applicants for digital programme and digital additional services licences, is available from the Secretary to the Independent Television Commission, 33 Foley Street, London, W1P 7LB.

Applications addressed to the Secretary to the Commission giving information in the form specified in the Invitation to Apply document, together with the application fee of £100,000, should reach the ITC not later than noon on 31 January 1997.

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## Socialists say spy stories are part of Right's dirty tricks campaign

## MI6 gave Paris list of 300 suspected Cold War 'moles'

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

MI6 gave the French secret service a list of some 300 French diplomats and foreign service officials suspected of being Communist spies during the Cold War, according to a French news report published yesterday.

The file containing the names of alleged traitors within the French foreign service was handed over by Britain in 1993 when Alain Juppé, the French Prime Minister, was Foreign Minister under the Gaullist Prime Minister, Edouard Balladur, *Le Monde* newspaper reported.

The British list of French "moles" said to have worked for East European countries was based on the flood of intelligence information to the West after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989.

Many of those named in the secret list are now either long retired or dead, an expert in security affairs at the newspaper said, adding that the source of the report was "completely reliable".

The allegation that hundreds of French foreign service officials may have been recruited as Communist agents emerged amid a furor over a report claiming that the late Charles Hernu, French Foreign Minister between 1981 and 1985, spied for the KGB as well as the Bulgarian and Romanian secret services in the 1950s and 1960s.

Government MPs called for a full investigation into the spying allegations while opposition Socialists suggested the charges against Hernu in yesterday's *L'Express* magazine might be part of a ruse to blacken the former Socialist administration. The Government has refused to comment on the allegations.

Jacques Fournier, the former head of French counter-intelligence, confirmed yesterday that the Bulgarian secret services had told France of Hernu's spying activities four years ago.

A close friend and political ally of François Mitterrand, the former President, Hernu died of a heart attack in 1990, five years after he resigned from the Defence Ministry.

M Fournier said that the Bulgarian report detailing Hernu's activities could not be fully verified but had been handed to Mitterrand, who classified the report as a "state secret" since the dead man could not defend himself.

Jean-Michel Boucheron, a Socialist MP, suggested the allegations against Hernu

might be "an operation conducted against the Left" at a time when the Gaullist Government is reeling from a series of corruption scandals.

"I am convinced this information did not come from the East but from France, and the question to be asked is if this leak got the green light from the Government or not," M Boucheron said.

*L'Express* said the secret files did not explain whether Hernu had continued to work as a spy after becoming Defence Minister, but French espionage experts said that his was probably only one of many similar cases.

"For Socialist countries in the 1950s, France was considered the weak link in the West," Thierry Wolton, author of *The KGB in France*, said, adding that it was entirely possible that Hernu had severed all contact with his Communist "handlers" after 1963.

The "Hernu Affair" is France's most damaging spy scandal since Georges Piquès, the Nato press chief, was arrested in 1963 on charges of providing information to the Soviet Union. Piquès was sentenced to life imprisonment for treason but released in 1970.



Charles Hernu, right, with his friend and political ally, François Mitterrand

## Adenauer record broken by Kohl

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

HELMUT KOHL, battered by criticism of his poor economic management, today becomes the longest-serving German Chancellor this century.

His disdain for the record, and his vulnerability, was underlined by his absence abroad yesterday during an emergency debate about the German budget: five Christian Democratic Union deputies in his entourage had to break off their Far East trip and hurry back to Bonn to secure the Government's narrow majority in parliament.

"When I start to worry about my place in history, I head for the refrigerator," he told a French paper. But his concern for his status may be greater than he pretends. The record which falls today is that of Konrad Adenauer: 5,144 days in office. If he survives the bumpy path to European monetary union, wins the 1998 election and stays fit, he could in 2001 topple the 19-year tenure of Bismarck, the Iron Chancellor.

The three men are already being talked about in the same breath by the German press. Bismarck unified Germany, Adenauer anchored West Germany in the Western alliance and laid the foundations of a democratic German state. Herr Kohl welded together the East and West German states and is the main driving force behind a united Europe.

## Magnate 'sexually harassed' writer of biography

FROM MARK FULLER IN AMSTERDAM

FREDDY HEINEKEN has been accused of threatening and sexually intimidating a journalist whose unauthorized biography on the Dutch beer magnate paints him as a divided personality, part philanthropist and brute and part brilliant businessman.

Barbara Smith, 28, said yesterday that the 72-year-old billionaire made "jokes" about putting sleeping pills in her tea and then undressing her and made "extremely denigrating comments" about her appearance. Ms Smith claimed Mr Heineken tried to stop the book and asked Pierre Vinken, the Dutch publishing baron, to buy up the small company publishing it.

"Heineken told me that if I put one comma in the wrong place he'd haul me up before the courts," Ms Smith added.

The book, *Heineken - A Life in the Brewery*, portrays the tycoon as being full of "despotic self-confidence", shocking colleagues with his loud and arrogant behaviour, while stunning them with his commercial shrewdness, which propelled Heineken from a legal beer into one of the world's most successful brands.

Kees Wolkje, a spokesman for Mr Heineken, denied that the billionaire had threatened and intimidated the author. Mr Wolkje said that "if Ms Smith said as though she had been threatened or intimidated, it was certainly based on a misunderstanding". The attempt to buy up the book's publisher was a "nonsense—a joke that had grown out of all proportion".

Although Mr Heineken refused to co-operate with the biography, he agreed to meet the author at least five times. Sources close to Mr Heineken said he was not upset by the book's references to his womanising, love of fast cars and private jets, but he was enraged by the story of the decline of his father, Henry Pierre Heineken, into drunkenness and disrepute.

## Heirlooms rescued from Vienna sale

BY ROGER BOYES

TWO seascapes and a porcelain dish were suddenly withdrawn yesterday from Christie's record-breaking auction of Jewish-owned art work after an elderly former Viennese resident recognised her family's property from the sale catalogue.

The last-minute claim from the woman, who now lives in Israel, cast a small shadow on the auction—which, on the first day raised £7.5 million on behalf of Jewish charities—as it again prompted the question of how thoroughly the Austrian authorities have been searching for owners.

The hoard of paintings, sculptures and antiques was taken from the Austrian Jewish community by the Nazis, sometimes confiscated after the Jews were arrested, sometimes in part payment for an exit visa.

After the war, the treasure trove was stored in the Mauerbach monastery out-

side Vienna. Pieces were lent to Austrian museums while the authorities set about halfheartedly searching for the true owners.

Only after considerable international pressure was a list of the stored artwork published, and then only in a small-circulation Austrian newspaper. A few hundred works were returned to owners, but the Austrian description of the looted property on sale as "ownerless" never seemed appropriate.

Holocaust survivors were among the bidders during the two-day sale which was due to end late last night. Some, such as Fran Lauffer, travelled from New York to enter the bidding for a single piece. In her case it was *In the Street* by the 19th-century artist Ludwig Konus, one of the few paintings with an explicitly Jewish theme. Other Jews, too poor to enter the fray, watched in silence, clutching their catalogues.

## 'Carlos' tries to halt book

BY BEN MACINTYRE

THE alleged international terrorist, "Carlos the Jackal", is seeking to halt a book which he claims is an invasion of his personal privacy and an infringement of his right to a fair trial.

Ulrich Ramirez Sanchez, 47, alias "Carlos", asked a Paris court on Tuesday to seize all copies of *Carlos - The Secret Networks of International Terrorism* by the French journalist Bernard Violet on the ground that it jeopardises his right to be presumed innocent and breaches France's strict privacy laws.

The Venezuelan-born self-styled revolutionary is accused of killing at least 83 people in a series of terrorist attacks in Europe and the Middle East. He was captured in Sudan in 1994.

His lawyer said he had taken offence at the book's "revelation of facts about his private life" including details concerning his school days when classmates nicknamed him "the little fat one", an affair with a Cuban student identified as "Sonia", and a testicle operation he had in Khartoum hospital. The court will rule on a ban today.

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## Vow to avenge Tutsi deaths

## War draws closer as Rwanda troops move into Zaire

FROM SAM KILEY IN KIGALI

RWANDA is on the verge of war with Zaire after it sent commandos across the Ruzizi River into Bukavu.

The Government said that it was close to ordering a larger retaliation against an alliance of Rwanda's former armed forces, Hutu extremist militia, and Zaire's army.

Major-General Paul Kagame, the Rwandan Vice-President and Minister of Defence, who led Tutsi rebels to victory against the Hutu supremacist regime in 1994, sent the troops into Zaire after the Rwandan border town of Cyangugu was shelled.

"If some one slaps me in the face I may not hit back in the face. But somewhere else will be hit. There's no question about it," General Kagame said. In statements which brought Rwanda to the brink of war with its neighbour, he described Hutu refugee camps inside Zaire as "barracks" where people who had exported the ideology of genocide were trying to "cleanse" the region of Tutsis to have a base for attacks against Rwanda.

"They have had the freedom to train, arm themselves and kill. If they consistently kill

people I can't see why they should not be killed themselves," the former guerrilla leader said.

Several thousand ethnic Tutsis, whose forbears have lived in Zaire for centuries, were murdered earlier this year near Goma in North Kivu province by Zairean soldiers and Rwandan Hutu refugee militiamen. Last month, Tutsis living in South Kivu were ordered to leave by Zaire's local authorities who threatened to hunt them down as rebels.

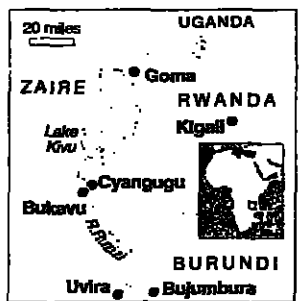
Incensed by what he described as plans to continue the genocide of Tutsis which began in Rwanda with the slaughter of a million in 1994, General Kagame said the time

was close when he would order an invasion of Zaire to pre-empt an attack on Rwanda.

The Rwandan commandos who infiltrated Bukavu were ordered to drive Zairean soldiers and their Hutu allies from the border area, from where they launched mortar attacks on Rwandan army positions and civilian areas. Their involvement in Bukavu is likely to bring South Kivu's provincial capital closer to collapse, with Tutsi rebels moving in from the south sending their enemies scuttling into shanties on the city's outskirts.

Rebel uprisings in North and South Kivu have created a massive humanitarian crisis in eastern Zaire affecting more than a million Hutu refugees. About 400,000 are now concentrated in Mugunga camp, near Goma, which has been the main base for the defeated Hutu army in exile.

□ Kinshasa: Mgr Christophe Munzihirwa, Jesuit Archbishop of Bukavu, was killed after being caught in an ambush in the town on Tuesday night, a Zairean church official said yesterday. (AFP)



## Scarred UN picks envoy amid fears of 'a second Congo'

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

THE ethnic conflict in Central Africa has diplomats and officials at United Nations headquarters giving dark warnings of a "Congo II". Experts on the Great Lakes area fear the fighting in eastern Zaire could fuel separatist violence in other provinces and lead to the country's collapse.

Yesterday the UN named Raymond Christen, the Canadian Ambassador in Washington, to head a one-month mission to secure a Zaire

ceasefire and set up a regional peace conference. The Canadian Prime Minister's nephew, he served in 1978-81 as Ottawa's envoy to Zaire, Burundi and Rwanda.

The eastern Zaire fighting is a knock-on from the Tutsi-Hutu conflict that led to genocide in Rwanda in 1994 and this year's Burundi coup.

The Tutsi people, cattle-herders who migrated south along the Rift Valley four centuries ago, make up a minority of about 15 per cent of the population in both Rwanda and Burundi but dominate the Hutu majority.

Tutsis have also lived for centuries in the North Kivu region of Zaire and in the Mulenge mountains in neighbouring South Kivu.

It is feared that the conflict will spread to the mineral-rich Shaba province, formerly Katanga — the very area that tried to secede from the Congo on independence from Belgium in the early 1960s. Then scores of UN peacekeepers were killed, leaving deep scars on the organisation.

"It will be just like the Congo crisis, except the UN won't be there," one UN official said yesterday.



The image of a mythical being, loosely based on a seahorse, first appeared in rock paintings 6,000 years ago

## Rainbow Serpent of Aborigines 'is the oldest religious symbol'

BY NIGEL HAWKES SCIENCE EDITOR

AUSTRALIAN Aborigines have the longest-established religious beliefs in the world, according to a new analysis of rock paintings by archaeologists.

An image of a mythical being called the Rainbow Serpent, loosely based on the seahorse family, first appeared in such paintings 6,000 years ago, they claim. Today, Aborigines regard it as a symbol of unity, creation and destruction, and the core of a spiritual system that tells of the creation of the world out of chaos.

Drs Paul Tacon, of the Australian Museum in Sydney, Christopher Chippindale, of Cambridge University, and Meredith Wilson, of the Australian National University in Canberra, argue that it was a religious icon from the beginning, making it the oldest religious symbol.

Writing in *Archaeology in Oceania*, they base their con-

clusions on a statistical analysis of 107 Rainbow Serpent paintings scattered across Australia, but commonest in Arnhem Land in the north-west of the country. They believe that the first images were inspired by sightings of the ribboned pipefish, *Halichthys taeniphora*, a type

of seahorse. The analysis shows that the style of the paintings appeared fully formed from the beginning. They show a snake-like body, curved horse-like head, a spiked tail, and appendages. The paintings tend to be shaded with cross-hatching, said by tribal elders to confer

sacredness to the images. Over the millennia, some changes have taken place, including an increase in size, but the key characteristics have remained the same. If the serpent has indeed been a religious symbol for all this time, "it is much older than the major components of religious and spiritual belief systems found elsewhere in the world", Dr Tacon told *New Scientist*.

Dr Chippindale said that in the past experts had to guess what each image meant to the people who created it. "What is unusual here is that there is a continuity of rock art right up to the present time in Arnhem Land. Therefore, one can have insights... from the present."

The first images may have been made by Aborigines living inland at the end of the last glaciation, when the sea rose as the ice melted. The effect would have been to create new coastlines inland on which the seahorse would have been washed up.



A rock painting of the Rainbow Serpent in Arnhem Land, northwest Australia. Alongside is a 10cm scale

## Apartheid assassin jailed for 212 years

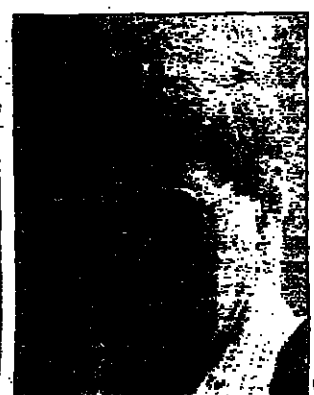
FROM INIGO GILMORE IN PRETORIA

EUGENE DE KOCK, the former police colonel who described himself as apartheid's most effective assassin, was yesterday sentenced to 212 years' imprisonment, including two life sentences, after a 21-month trial that has gripped South Africa with its exposure of shocking details of the "secret war" against the former white regime's opponents.

As Judge Willem van der Merwe passed sentence on 89 counts, gasps and mocking laughter rippled through the packed gallery. Speaking solemnly in Afrikaans, the white judge slowly read out the sentences of two life terms for murder and conspiracy to murder, five 20-year terms on five murder counts and between two and 20 years on each of the 83 lesser counts. He is the highest-ranking officer to be convicted for crimes committed in the apartheid era.

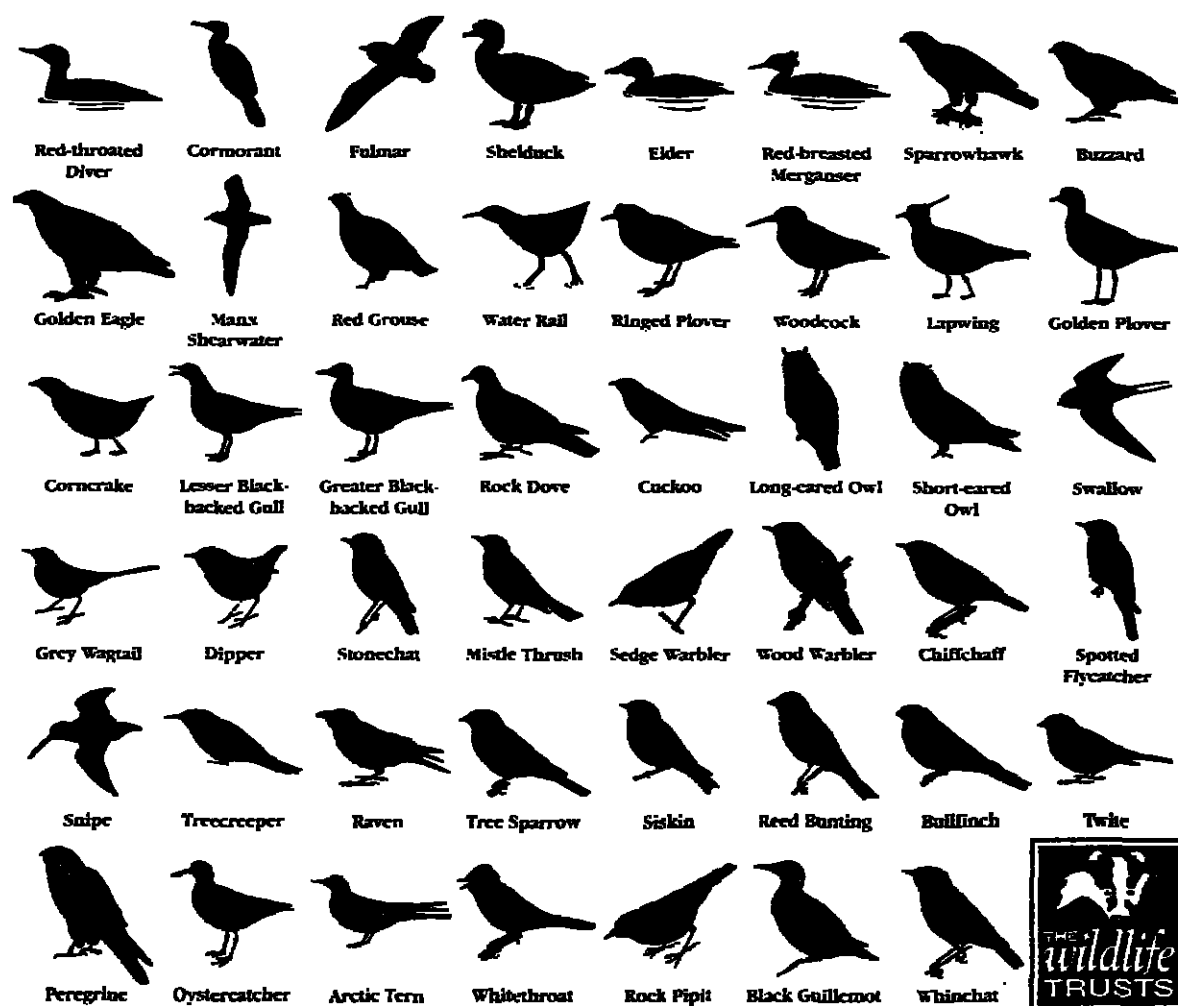
De Kock's defence had argued in mitigation that he had been following orders that came from the highest level. During his testimony de Kock implicated F.W. de Klerk and P.W. Botha, the former Presidents, in "dirty tricks" operations. However, his lawyers said he was unlikely to appeal.

The sentence was welcomed in an official ANC statement and by human rights lawyers. The ruling may go some way to restoring faith in the judicial system after an outcry over the acquittal of General Magnus Malan, the former Defence Minister, on murder charges recently.



De Kock's lawyers say he is unlikely to appeal

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# Taleban bombers aim to destroy Masood morale

FROM MICHAEL DYNES IN THE PANJSHIR VALLEY

TALEBAN planes dropped cluster bombs deep in the Panjshir Valley stronghold of Ahmed Shah Masood, the commander of the forces besieging northern Kabul, it was claimed yesterday.

Although audacious, the raid was little more than symbolic. It was well out of the reach of General Masood's anti-aircraft batteries, which have been ferried by helicopter to the valley's highest peaks, and there was just one casualty.

It has, nonetheless, served as something of a propaganda coup for the Taleban zealots, who have been broadcasting "We are going to push you back to the Panjshir" over General Masood's radio frequencies in an attempt to damage his fighters' morale.

Apart from sporadic fire from tanks, artillery and rocket launchers, the fighting on the two northern roads into Kabul has settled down into

an Afghan version of a phoney war. Taleban warplanes, however, continued to bomb the towns of Charikar and Jabal-e-Siraj, provoking a cascade of anti-aircraft fire from all over the Hindu Kush. But, in reality, the front lines have moved little.

As a huge red dust cloud welled over the plain to the north of the city, more and more fighters, with General Masood and his northern ally, General Abdul Rashid Dostum, were being moved into position for a renewed assault on Taleban strongholds in the Safi Mountains.

After exaggerated claims over Sunday's assault, elements in General Masood's camp now acknowledge that their advance has been stymied by stiff Taleban resistance. Whatever people in Kabul think of Taleban, its fighting ability should not be underestimated. In common with other messianic move-

ments throughout history, Taleban believes it is in possession of the truth. Moreover, the young men see themselves as the custodians of that truth. Such unshakeable conviction has turned them into fanatical fighters.

Having been stopped in their attempt to take control of the capital, the Masood-Dostum alliance appears in no hurry to repeat earlier mistakes. "Time", one senior Masood aide said, "is on our side."

Preparations are clearly under way for a far greater aerial bombardment than that which took place on Sunday. Last night, 20 flatbed lorries were moving in convoy to Bagram air base to collect large quantities of bombs for the Dostum air force.

"We make a deal," a Masood spokesman said. "We have bombs but no planes. Dostum has planes but no bombs." Activity could be



A soldier of the anti-Taleban alliance carries tank ammunition along a path after the road through the Panjshir Valley was blown up

observed on the road leading to the Panjshir Valley. It was dynamited shortly after Taleban pushed north last month, and has still not been repaired. The only route out now is by foot, along a

precarious precipice above the river. Substantial quantities of armaments are presently being trucked to the Panjshir from General Masood's arms dumps in the north, carried over the narrow precipice by

hand, and then transported to the front lines.

During our five-hour journey up the Panjshir, we also visited the prison where General Masood has incarcerated Pakistani nationals who have

played a leading role in financing, organising and leading the Taleban uprising.

One prisoner, who identified himself only as Khalid, 22, said that many Taleban guerrillas had received three or

four months' military training in Pakistan before returning to Kandahar in southern Afghanistan. "The Pakistan Government has helped to train fighters for the Afghanistan conflict," he said.

## Crackdown on women's rights leaves aid agencies split on Kabul pullout

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN KABUL

AID agencies in Afghanistan are divided over whether to quit or stay. Their dilemma centres on two questions: does the work assist the repressive Taleban theocracy? Does it absolve Taleban of responsibility for its calculated impoverishment of women?

Oxfam has suspended its Kabul operations until women are allowed to work, putting it in the lead of the protest movement. Its stand is criticised by other aid agencies that believe in accommodating the Taleban regime in the hope that it will become less repressive.

There are signs, however, that big donors are questioning the propriety of aid programmes that could reinforce Taleban's extremist dogma.

Sue Emmott, Afghanistan representative for Oxfam, said yesterday: "Our pro-

grammes will stay suspended until our Afghan women employees are allowed to return to work. There has been too much accommodation, too quickly, with the Taleban authorities. We are shocked that aid organisations have acquiesced like this."

After three days of discus-

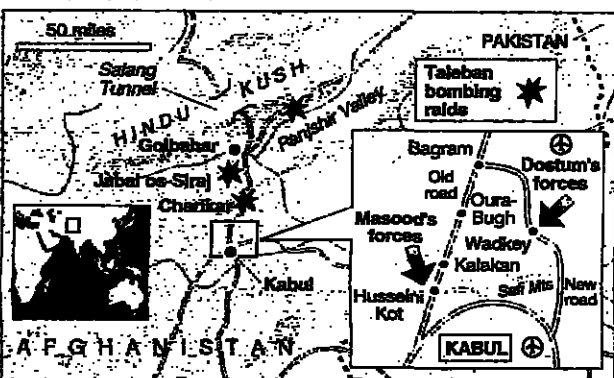
sion last month, aid groups in Kabul enshrined their soft-soled approach in a policy paper that many now regard as too timid. It was handed to Taleban in the hope that the issues raised would be tackled within a fortnight: it was ignored.

The paper said aid groups

"respectfully request that the authorities in Kabul act with all possible urgency" on the issue of female rights. Attempts to revise and toughen this wording failed in a meeting of aid workers this week. Some argued that aid organisations should not become involved in politics.

"Most aid organisations are going soft on the women's issue," Ross Everson, of ACBAR, the Kabul-based co-ordinating body for foreign aid agencies, said. "I have been trying to persuade them to put some backbone into this issue... The present approach is gutless."

Ms Emmott said Kabul's women had been allowed to work for 50 years, and without women the city could not function. The civil service, hospitals and schools depended on them.



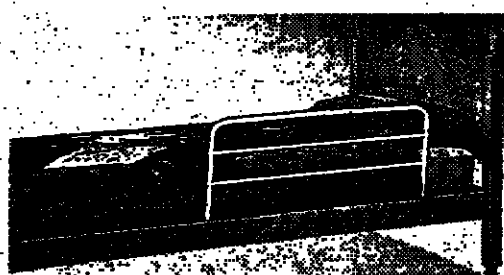
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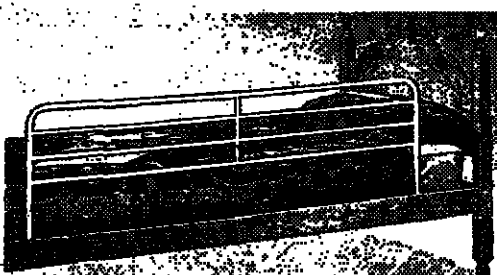
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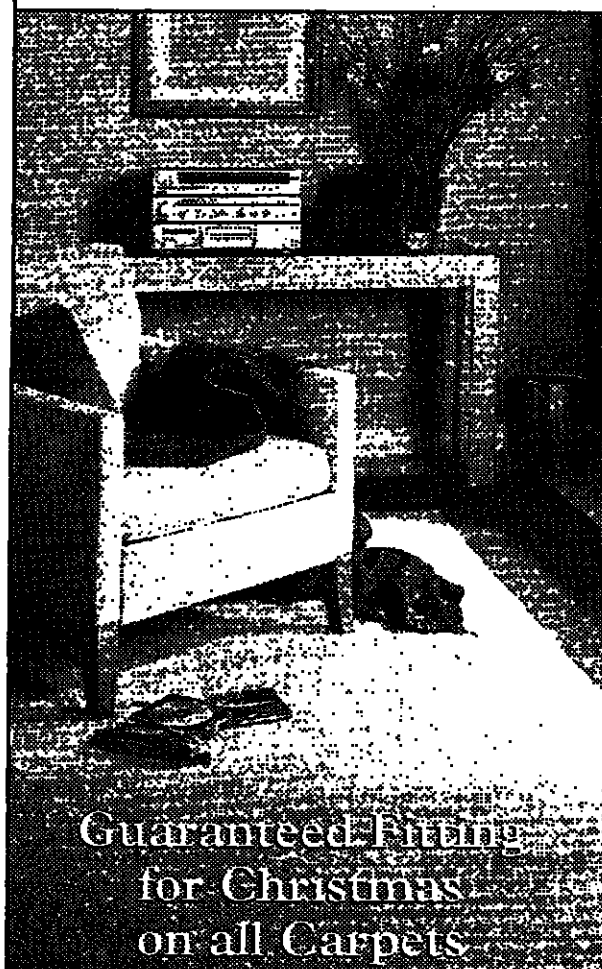


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Fears of Arab-Israeli 'holocaust' as streets of ancient Hebron seethe with hate

# Shin Bet demands curbs on militant Jewish settlers

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN HEBRON

ISRAEL'S Shin Bet security service yesterday demanded restraining orders on dozens of right-wing Jewish militants as fears grew that Hebron could provide the spark to ignite a new Middle East war.

Earlier, the head of the Likud parliamentary faction of Benjamin Netanyahu, the Prime Minister, gave a warning of a "holocaust" unless the Government acted against Jewish hardliners in the city who still openly identify with Baruch Goldstein, the Brooklyn-born Jew who massacred 29 Hebron Arabs in 1994.

A few hours spent walking in Hebron's hate-filled streets are enough to convince an outsider that the fears are well-founded. Apocalyptic predictions seem to be the only thing on which the city's Arabs and Jews agree.

"If the Israelis pull out, the

Jewish settlers will soon be using their guns," said a diplomat who toured with me. "And if the Israelis stay put, Palestinians here and in the rest of the West Bank and Gaza will explode."

Although 20,000 right-wing Jews gathered in Jerusalem on Tuesday in an attempt to persuade Mr Netanyahu to renege on the commitment given by the previous Labour Government to hand 85 per cent of Hebron to PLO control, few of the 450 Jews living in its centre, cheek-by-jowl with 120,000 hostile Palestinians, believe he will.

Nadia Matar, leader of the right-wing Women in Green, highlighted the angst that negotiating a pull-out has posed for Mr Netanyahu; his own brother-in-law this week moved to join the Jews here in a powerful gesture of solidarity.

ty. "He who forsakes Hebron forsakes not only the security of the residents of Hebron but also 4,000 years of Jewish history," Ms Matar quoted the Prime Minister as pledging. "These words you said at Passover last year. We chose you because you intentions were desirable — but now the testing time comes."

A noted hotbed of Islamic fundamentalism as well as Jewish extremism, Hebron — the last of the seven West Bank towns still occupied by Israeli troops — has long been a flashpoint between Arabs and Jews because of the Cave of Machpelah, or Tomb of the Patriarchs.

Apart from the militancy of activists on both sides of the ethnic divide, it is the presence of Jewish settlers in the heart of the city that has made Hebron a thorn in the side of peace negotiations. A further 6,000 live in Kiryat Arba, a fortress-style settlement on the outskirts that is less vulnerable to attack.

Noam Arnon, leader of the new settlers' militia busy stockpiling arms in preparation for the expected Israeli pullback, explained his fears. "Once the PLO terrorists are in control of those buildings," he said, pointing to flat-roofed Arab houses hugging the hillside opposite his settlement of Beit Hadassah, "what is to stop them firing RPGs [rocket-propelled grenades] straight into our windows?"

Inside Beit Hadassah, also home to a museum in memory



An Israeli soldier searches detained Palestinians in Hebron, a focus of Jewish-Arab tensions, for weapons

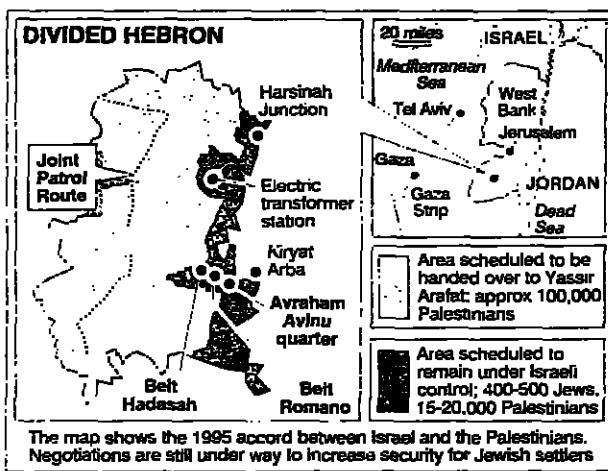
## City of bloodshed and piety

BY CHRISTOPHER WALKER

HEBRON has long been characterised by a mix of holiness and violence. One of the four holy cities of Judaism because of its links to the biblical patriarchs and King David, it is also holy to Islam, which reveres Abraham as a precursor of Muhammad.

Some key dates are:

- 1800 BC: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob buried in Cave of Machpelah — Tomb of the Patriarchs.
- 586 BC: Most Jews exiled after destruction of First Temple.
- 400-500 AD: Byzantine church built over the Cave.
- 635-1000: Arabs conquer and rule the city. Machpelah church turned into mosque.
- 1266: Decree, enforced through to the 20th century, bans Jews from the Cave.
- 1918: British capture Hebron from Turks. Jewish presence recovers to 700 by 1929.
- August 24, 1929: 67 Jews slaughtered by Arabs; rest of the community evacuated.
- 1967: Israel captures city from Jordan in Six-Day War.
- 1968: Group of Jewish settlers posing as Swiss tourists move into Park Hotel. Moved by authorities to Civil Administration compound which becomes Kiryat Arba.
- 1979: Group of Kiryat Arba women barricade themselves in Beit Hadassah, abandoned Jewish clinic in downtown Hebron.
- 1994: Baruch Goldstein, a Kiryat Arba resident, massacres 29 Muslims at prayer.
- March 1996: Original scheduled date for Israeli army handover of 85 per cent of Hebron to PLO control.



The map shows the 1995 accord between Israel and the Palestinians. Negotiations are still under way to increase security for Jewish settlers

## Britain pledges more aid to Palestinians

BY MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

BRITAIN promised a further £1.3 million in aid to the Palestinians yesterday, four days before Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, arrives in Israel to urge both sides to redouble their efforts to reach agreement.

The aid is to help to meet the Palestinian budgetary deficit which has worsened because of recent Israeli border closures. Britain and the European Union are the main providers of funds to the Palestinian Authority, and are increasingly concerned about the situation there and in the occupied territories.

The timing of the announcement will not be particularly welcome in Israel, which is suspicious of European sup-

port for Yassir Arafat. It follows an outspoken attack by Baroness Chalker of Wallasey, the Overseas Development Minister, on Israel for its harassment of the United Nations Refugee Welfare Association (UNRWA), the agency which provides food and education for Palestinian refugees.

Lady Chalker demanded that Israel should urgently ease the passage of aid personnel, food, medical supplies and development assistance in the occupied territories.

Mr Rifkind will meet Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, on Sunday before travelling to Gaza to see a British aid project and have talks with Mr Arafat.

### NEWS IN BRIEF

## French to sign Royal Navy pact

BRITAIN and France are to sign a military agreement that will draw their navies closer together in future operations (Michael Evans, Defence Correspondent, writes).

The political framework to be signed next month by Michael Portillo, the Defence Secretary, and Charles Millon, his French counterpart, could lead to the Royal Navy and the French Navy sharing patrol responsibilities in conflict or peacekeeping missions.

However, the "Letter of Intent", which is to be signed in Bordeaux on November 2, will not include nuclear submarines.

## Japan backs end to ivory ban

Tokyo: Environmental groups have attacked Japan, the world's biggest consumer of ivory, for supporting African nations' demand for an end to the international ivory trade ban (Robert Whyman writes).

Ryutaro Hashimoto, the Prime Minister, made the promise to President Nujoma, the visiting Namibian leader, who said that African elephants could no longer be regarded as endangered.

## Swiss join up

Zurich: Traditionally neutral Switzerland has announced that it would join Nato's Partnership for Peace programme in an attempt to promote security in post-Cold War Europe. (Reuter)

## Pope for Cuba

Formal agreement has been reached for the Pope to make a first visit to Cuba, ending a six-year stalemate. No date has been set, but he may meet President Castro in Rome next month at a UN food summit.

## Abortion boost

Cape Town: The South African National Assembly approved a Bill allowing state-funded abortion on demand. The Bill will go to the Senate next week, where it is certain to be passed. (Reuter)

## Eyes 'stolen'

Cairo: The mortuary director of a public hospital in the Egyptian capital has been arrested for removing eyes from corpses and selling them for transplants. al-Akhar newspaper reported. (AFP)

## Wheel manners

New York: Two gunmen held up the Tavern on the Green, a noted restaurant, taking \$200. When they left, the police doorman said goodnight and hailed them a taxi. They robbed the taxi driver too. (AP)

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## Parties neck-and-neck in polls

# Fight for Congress turns main contest into a sideshow

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

WITH six days left, the race for the White House may be petering out but the battle for Congress is becoming one of the tightest ever.

The number of Senate contests that are too close to call is increasing while either party could control the House of Representatives. Four political analysts consulted by *The Wall Street Journal* said there was a 20 to 40 per cent chance of the Republicans losing the Senate, and a 25 to 50 per cent chance of them losing the House. One, Charles Cook, said he had "never seen a wider or more diverse range of possible outcomes".

Of the 34 Senate seats being contested, 19 are held by the Republicans and 15 by the Democrats who need a net gain of three to take control. Latest polls show their candidates moving ahead of Larry Pressler, the Republican senator, in South Dakota and closing within two points in Colorado where a Republican is retiring from the Senate. The races for Republican-held seats in New Hampshire, Oregon and Maine could go either way and the Democrats have an outside chance of winning Bob Dole's old Kansas seat or Jesse Helms's in North Carolina.

The Democratic candidate is rebounding in Alabama, a seat he had resigned himself to losing. But Republican candidates are catching up in the Democrat-held states of Montana, Nebraska and Georgia, and remain

virtually neck-and-neck in Arkansas and New Jersey. In Massachusetts, John Kerry, the Democratic incumbent, has a narrow lead over William Weld, the Republican Governor.

Both parties are now pouring resources into the congressional races having concluded that the presidential contest is all but over. Republican officials are begging the television networks not to declare the presidential result too early on Tuesday night lest West Coast

10:20pm because the alternative, Dulles, is 30 miles from his Watergate apartment.

The presidential election is frequently relegated to second or third item on the evening news and the lack of excitement was summed up by *The Washington Post's* tepid endorsement of Mr Clinton yesterday. "The choice for president this year is pretty bleak. Frequently the strongest single argument for either candidate is that he's not the other. In the end, we lean towards Mr Clinton," the newspaper said.

Today or tomorrow Mr Clinton will seek to bridge the only obvious pitfall on his road to re-election by giving a speech calling for campaign finance reform. Over the past three weeks he has been battered by claims that his party solicited huge illegal contributions from Indonesia, South Korea and Taiwan in return for political favours.

But for the most part his speeches are bland and safe and he refuses to respond to Mr Dole's "serial flailing", as the White House has dubbed his increasingly strident attacks. On Tuesday the President gave a rare glimpse of his confidence when some Republicans in Ohio heckled his speech. "I bet they won't be doing that a week from today," he declared.

One Clinton adviser quoted in *The New York Times* compared the election to a dinner party that had gone on an hour too long.



Republicans decide to stay at home and hurt their congressional candidates.

Four years ago Mr Clinton had talked himself hoarse by this stage and was campaigning almost round the clock. This year, he and Mr Dole spent Tuesday night not in some battleground state but in Washington. Mr Dole actually rushed through his final engagement in California, the state on which he is supposedly banking for victory, in order to get home before the capital's National airport closed at



Air mail: a selection of the US Postal Service stamps released this week featuring classic American aircraft

## Right's 'Top Gun' goes into a spin

FROM GILES WHITTILL IN GARDEN GROVE, ORANGE COUNTY

WHETHER or not Bob "B" Dornan goes down in flames on election day, he will risk more than his political hide soon afterwards. The only congressman to boast of having flown every warplane in Nato's arsenal has accepted an invitation to perform aerobatics over Texas in an old British Hawker Hunter jet.

The objective is to put in some cockpit practice while boosting the sagging spirits of "Top Gun" pilots at a time of defence cutbacks. "It's terrific for the morale of aircrews to see a middle-aged congressman go up and put his life on the line," Mr Dornan, 63, told *The Times* in an interview that could have taken place at the height of the Cold War.

Over the roar of nearby freeways, this

former test pilot and firebrand of the hard Right introduced the beleaguered Bob Dole on Monday to a thin crowd gathered outside the home of an ice-hockey team called the Mighty Ducks. It was hard to know who risked more: Mr Dole, appearing at an unfortunately named site with a figure whom pollsters say strikes fear into the hearts of crucial "soccer mom" voters; Mr Dornan, backing Mr Dole even as other Republicans desert him; or Bo Derek, the actress and occasional lingerie model who joined both men on the podium.

"She leaped up against me up there," Mr Dornan, a ferocious advocate of Roman Catholic family values, confided. "It was like a fantasy come true."

He exudes a blustery charm, but eight months after a doomed run for the Republican presidential nomination, Mr Dornan is fighting for his political life in the traditionally conservative heart of Orange County. After nine terms in Congress, the man who likes to be thought of as President Clinton's harshest critic is running neck-and-neck with a 36-year-old Hispanic woman.

His Garden Grove district is a place of no-frills shopping malls and a glass cathedral from where one of America's richest televangelists broadcasts *The Hour of Power*. Its 49 per cent Latino population has not warmed to Mr Dornan's frequent tirades against illegal immigration.

## Golf no handicap for top earners

BY GILES WHITTILL

KNOCKING a little white ball about has surpassed both Hollywood and Las Vegas in earning potential, according to an unofficial audit of the very rich. The survey, by *People* magazine, indicates that nobody outside the world's main financial markets has ever earned so much and so fast as Tiger Woods, the young golfer who turned professional this month.

Even Tom Cruise, who will make \$60 million (£36.5 million) as star and producer of *Mission Impossible*, cannot match the speed with which the 20-year-old Woods earned a similar sum in endorsement money the instant he stopped being a mere Stanford University student. Cruise's earnings from the hit film will earn \$54,807 a week in interest. Woods has topped that with \$734,794 in prize money since October 20.

Michael Jordan, the basketball player, for years America's best-paid sportsman, is a slouch next to golf's new wunderkind. He received just \$40 million in endorsements for the whole year, though his \$25 million playing fee adds nearly \$7,000 for every minute he spends on court.

Television remains a worthwhile profession for performers. Oprah Winfrey will take home \$97 million this year. Men still earn more than women in the movies, but they are trounced on the carwash. The nation's top male model is paid \$550,000 a year while Cindy Crawford makes up to \$9 million annually.

Comparisons are invidious, but revealing. David Hasselhoff, star of *Baywatch*, banks \$100,000 for each episode. A real Santa Monica lifeguard earns \$40,000 a year.

## Dole finds traditional vote is drying up in Arizona

FROM TOM RHODES IN PHOENIX, ARIZONA

MARION MURRAY, 56, has voted Republican all her life but today she will join the opposition as a key organiser for President Clinton's final rally in the unlikely battleground of the Arizona desert.

When America goes to the polls on Tuesday, Ms Murray may provide the most telling example of why he could become the first Democrat since 1948 to secure this traditionally conservative state.

She is disenchanted by the Republican revolution of Newt Gingrich, the increasing power of the religious Right, extensive corruption in Arizona's state government and Bob Dole's inability to confront the important issues of education and healthcare.

Two weeks ago, Ms Murray became the co-ordinator of a new grassroots alliance in Arizona: Republican Women for Clinton-Core. Hundreds of women have apparently flocked to the cause.

Women like Ms Murray form the largest swing vote here this year and offer Mr Clinton a chance to break the longest losing streak in US

political history. A Democratic campaign headquarters in Phoenix would normally be a ghost town by late October. Yesterday, dozens of volunteers scurried in preparation for the presidential visit to Arizona State University this morning.

Doug Wilson, who is state director of the Clinton campaign, said changing demographics in Arizona, victory in the Republican primary for Steve Forbes, the multi-millionaire publisher, and Mr



Dole: suffering a dearth of support in the desert

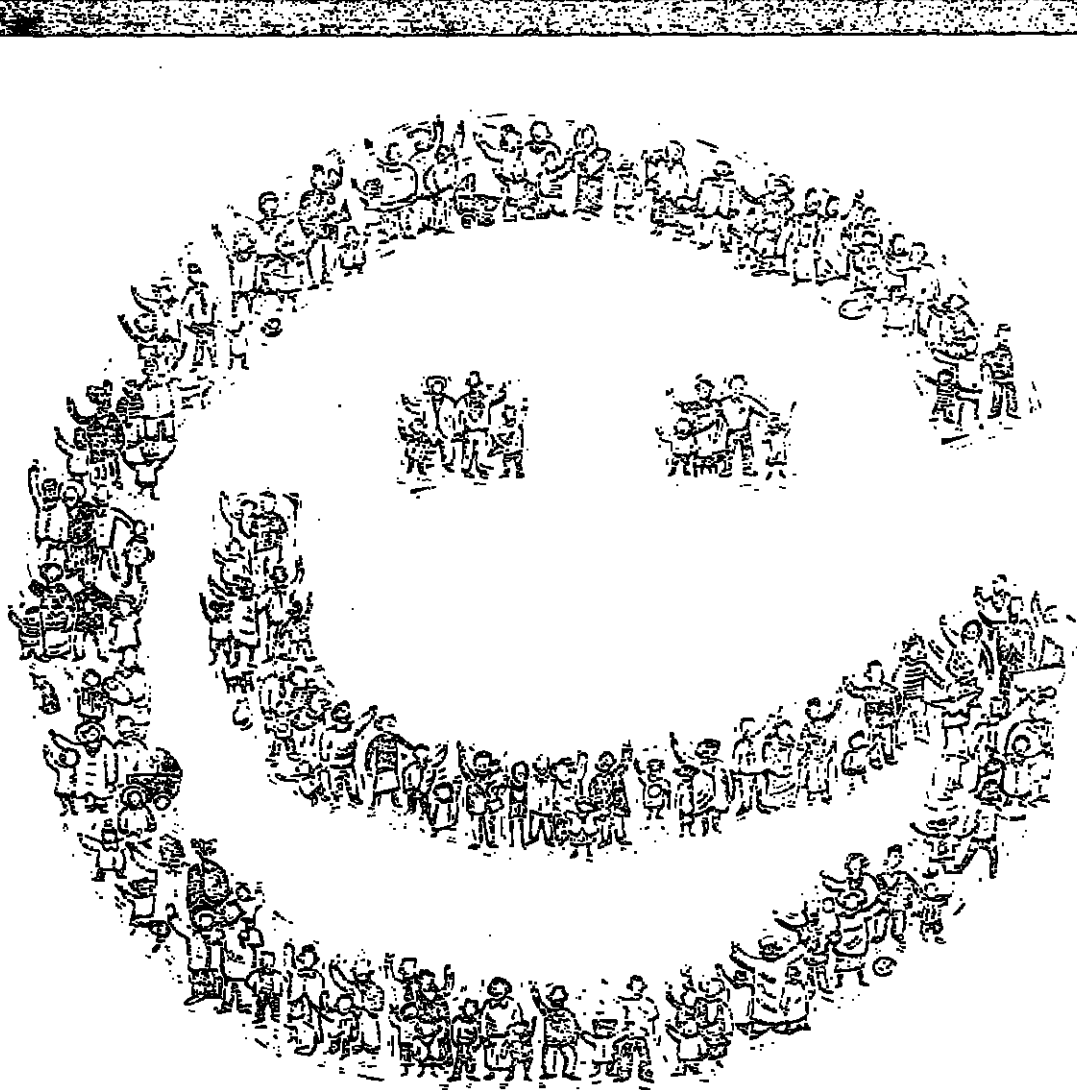
Dole's inability, at 73, to tempt many in the burgeoning retirement communities could prove the key to the Democrats' good fortune in 1996.

The desert republic is one of the fastest growing states. The traditional model of Sun Belt Republicanism that had attracted conservative migrants since the 1950s now lures families from California and the North-East who are increasingly unattached to either political party.

Although Arizona represents only eight electoral college votes, Republicans are determined Mr Clinton should not shatter its importance as a conservative stronghold.

Mr Dole returns to Phoenix on Monday in an eleventh-hour attempt to ensure victory. His party is spending \$446,000 on mail ballots and get-out-the-vote phone banks. Yet closest aides are not entirely confident.

"There's a lot wrong with the picture," said Mike Mellon, a state committee member. "I think Dole is going to win, but it shouldn't be this hard."



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# Editor who suffered for her art

FOR THE past 11 years, the woman with the worst job in the civilised world has been a soft-spoken, bespectacled book editor called Jane Turner. To her, during all these years, has fallen the task of editing the 34-volume, 15,000-image, 30,000-page, 41,000-article, 720,000-entry, 28 million word *Macmillan Dictionary of Art*.

It is, arguably, the most exhausting, exhaustive publishing feat of the age. That may explain why Mrs Turner, just now, is feeling zonked.

Amid all those statistics, however, such as the fact that the dictionary was delivered four years and a million words after deadline, that Mrs Turner had 150 people working for her, at the zenith, that it has cost millions, that she herself spent the past two years on the other side of the world from her husband, father of their infant son, or that she worked seven days a week, usually 18 hours a day, proofreading 450 pages a day and double-checking from last Christmas until March ... amid all that, surely the most daunting fact is that Mrs Turner dealt with no fewer than 6,700 art historians.

On the measure of personal irritability art historians register the highest of scores. The stroppest Bond Street moll, compared to the art historian, becomes a toothless pelinee.

Over lunch in Manhattan, Jane Turner did look a little pale. Her hand shook, one could not help noticing, and her American voice, its cadences prettily peppered by Anglicisms after a decade of London life, quavered.

The academics helped to write the dictionary but there were plenty who complicated her task. One, from Romania, called to say that, with regret, his copy would be "er, later" because his life's work had moments earlier been shot to ribbons in revolutionary Bucharest. Mrs Turner was on the verge of a sardonic "yeah, sure" when she realised that the poor wretch was telling the truth.

Another art historian, who was commissioned to write the (illustrated) section on erotic art, really did lose his manuscript from the back of his car. The art world is one of intense rivalries. Artists, patrons, and collectors lobbied Mrs Turner, sometimes in person, to be included in the reference book.

When, at a meeting of contributors, Mrs Turner happily announced that the generally respected Richard Wollheim had written a particular entry, a voice from the back of the hall shrieked: "Good God! If I had known that terrible fellow was contributing to the book, I would never have agreed to help." And with that the complainant, a senior member of England's art history world, flounced out of the room. Academics are bad at meeting deadlines, and it reached the stage that Ian Jacobs, publisher of Macmillan, took personal control of chasing 3,500 "delinquent" contributors. One eminent scholar, on hearing him at the door of his faculty, hid in the ladies' lavatory. Jacobs was later lunching at Covent Garden when he saw the tardy contributor walking by. Napkin still in collar, he rose from his table and chased him down the street.

It was in the early 1980s, at a dinner celebrating Macmillan's updated *Grove Dictionary of Music*, that the art dictionary was born. After a ghastly evening Harold Macmillan, later the Earl of Stockton, murmured to Nicholas Byam Shaw, his senior publishing executive, who comes from an artistic family: "Well, dear boy, what shall we do next?" Byam Shaw sucked on his teeth and said: "What about a dictionary of art?" Macmillan, airily: "Splendid

As the woman in charge of editing the new 34-volume *Macmillan Dictionary of Art*, Jane Turner had, arguably the worst job in the world. Interview by Quentin Letts.



The 34-volume, 41,000-article, 720,000-entry, 30,000-page *Macmillan Dictionary of Art*, arguably, the most exhausting, exhaustive publishing feat of the age, and its editor, Jane Turner

idea. Capital! Carry on." And that was it.

Or at least that was the beginning. Mr Jacobs, not a man given to overstatement, calls the dictionary "the most tremendous bloody slog, a project of staggering complexity". What Mrs Turner brought to the show was a level of logistical skill worthy of Operation Desert Storm. She dragged the staff into cadres of oiled efficiency, building on the initial work of the visionary Hugh Brigstocke.

The first step was to identify experts in the countless fields of expertise, itself no easy task. The crustiest old sweats from Cambridge, Harvard, Oxford, the Sorbonne, the Hermitage, the Prado and numerous other international institutions had to be charmed and cajoled. The top art scholars from Tonga to Trinidad, Curacao to

Croydon, had to be identified and hired. All had to be made to feel special. Worse, their scrawls, egg-spattered manuscripts, and often foreign meanderings had to be deciphered and subjected to strict yet sensitive editing.

Then there was the business of allocating page quotas, for individual entries, a necessarily crude affair which would later be fine-tuned. Mrs Turner, previously an historian of the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, also had to create a system of "rolling editing" so that no department in her six-floor fiefdom off the Strand was idle.

It is the nature of the art world never to be satisfied, and some American critics have already claimed to have identified a British bias. Mrs Turner is American, so this seems unlikely (her husband,

the British art expert Nicholas Turner, works for the Getty Museum in California). At early public lectures in the US, feminists have whinged about the imbalance of male artists over female. "It was not my fault that in previous centuries few women were allowed to paint," retorted Mrs Turner.

There will also be squabbles about the inclusion or exclusion of living artists. Damien Hirst does not make the cut, but a German artist called Hermann Nitsch who experimented with animal carcasses

in the Sixties, does. Another trendy name excluded, hurray, is the award-winning sculptress Rachael Whiteread. Mrs Turner gives the distinct impression of being unimpressed by inside-out houses.

Living patrons of importance are included (the Saatchis scrape in) but there is only one breathing art historian in the entire work: Sir Ernest Gombrich. "That, simply, is because he changed the face of

art criticism this century," says Mrs Turner. Among book reviewers, meanwhile, competition is strong for the rationed 12 copies of the complete work — 12 for the whole world, that is — which have been reserved as review copies.

When, after a career span, bound volumes of the dictionary arrived at the Macmillan headquarters in London, Mr Jacobs found his knee went into an uncontrollable wobble. Mrs Turner just stopped and gawped at what she had

helped achieve. She is now engaged in a trans-global promotional tour which should earn her enough air miles to bag her a place in the next Nasa space shuttle.

There is still, in the Macmillan camp, an air of anticlimax, coupled with triumph, that they have produced this enormous length of scholastic sausage. With the age of computer information, it could be the last great work of reference to be assembled between hard covers. And just think, it could be yours. All for a mere £5,750.

A senior art historian flounced out of the room

editing" so that no department in her six-floor fiefdom off the Strand was idle.

## Faustian fantasy

HIDDEN EUROPE

THE real-life "Dr Faustus" was a vagabond mountebank and fairground conjurer, who died at Staufen in Breisgau in 1541. Supposedly a graduate of Cracow, like Copernicus, he frequented numerous German universities, presenting himself as Magister Georgius Sabellicus Faustus Junior. He became notorious for his blasphemies, for his "miracles" such as changing water into wine, and for his claim to be in league with the Devil. His exploits inspired a stream of so-called *Faustbooks*. The first of them, compiled at Frankfurt in 1587, was translated into Danish in 1588, into French and Dutch in 1592, and into English before 1594. As a fictional figure, Faust made his debut in 1594 in the play by Christopher Marlowe, where he appears as a man of overweening ambition, striving to become "great Emperor of the world". He enjoys a season of power before the Devil reclaims his own. In Germany he featured in a lost drama by Lessing, and in a novel by F M Klinger (1791), before being adopted as the central protagonist of Goethe's two-part verse tragedy (1808, 1832).

Goethe's *Faust* defies easy summary. Faust's pact with Mephisto promises him rejuvenation, and he lives to be a hundred. *Gib meine Jugend mir zurück!* In Part II, which treats the *grosse Welt* of society and politics, he is the minister of a wretched emperor. When he dies, Gretchen intervenes, and the Devil is cheated; heavenly choirs greet the progress of a redeemed soul, as Love triumphs. *Der früh Geliebte, Nicht mehr Getriebene, Er kommt zurück!* (The beloved of long ago, no more befogged, is coming back) Goethe's masterpiece inspired two operas, by Gounod and Berlioz, and the *Faust* Symphony (1887) by Liszt. Thomas Mann's novel, *Doktor Faustus*, (1947), revived the legend for a grim judgment on Germany.

NORMAN DAVIES

● This occasional series of "capsules" is from *Europe: A History* by Norman Davies (OUP).

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# Deliver us from these fallacies

Nicholas Tate defends the national forum's code on morality

There are four modern fallacies about morality we need to tackle if we are to support schools and parents in promoting the moral development of young people. The first is the fallacy that because we are now such a pluralistic society — a premise which in itself exaggerates the extent of fragmentation — that we do not and cannot, *ipso facto*, share a common moral code. What has been shown by recent events, not least the response to Dunblane and the murder of Philip Lawrence, is that this is simply not true.

All major civilisations and faiths show a remarkable convergence when defining those things in the human spirit worth valuing. This too was the experience of the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority's national forum on values, in which nearly 150 people of all faiths and none surprised themselves by the extent to which they were able to reach agreement on a range of values to do with society, relationships, self and the environment.

They did not agree about the source of our values, for example whether this is God or in human nature, nor on their application to particular issues such as abortion and sexual morality; but all agreed that they valued truth, obedience to the law, collective endeavour for the sake of the common good, and our duty to try to discover

The forum is helping to create a new mood in the nation

meaning and purpose in life. These and other values they wanted to see explicitly proclaimed.

The response of some members of our weary metropolitan intelligentsia has been predictable, and should be ignored. Their attitudes — contemptuous of tradition, excited by the novel and bizarre, dismissive of the concerns of ordinary people — have been at the root of our moral confusion.

Equally predictable has been the response of those whose more particular moral views have not been included in the consensual statement of core values. Here I am more sympathetic. Social cohesion depends on stable relationships, stable marriages, fidelity, trust and a central role for the family. It is vital that we give all this its maximum support. But it is not true that there is complete consensus within society that one kind of family unit is more valued than another.

The second fallacy is that moral opinions are no different from tastes and preferences, that there is no more point in arguing about moral matters than about tastes in food or foreign holidays. This kind of moral relativism is linked to the idea that our society is now so pluralistic that all we can do is agree to disagree.

We have been extremely successful in conveying this attitude to young people, as teachers will tell you. What we need is a reassertion of the idea of moral truth. One respects people with whose moral views one disagrees by reasoning with them, not by asserting lamely that their views

are as worthy as one's own. The third fallacy is that the supreme value is respect and tolerance. One of the findings of our survey of schools' value-statements was that schools which very definitely do not respect everyone — for example bullies and racists — still feel a need to claim that everyone is worthy of respect. This is a reflection of what, outside schools, has sometimes come to seem like a "no blame, no shame" society. The national forum was very clear that it did not tolerate or respect everyone, and that people should have the courage to say this. At the same time it wished to preserve the genuine respect for difference and diversity that has been one of the gains of modern society.

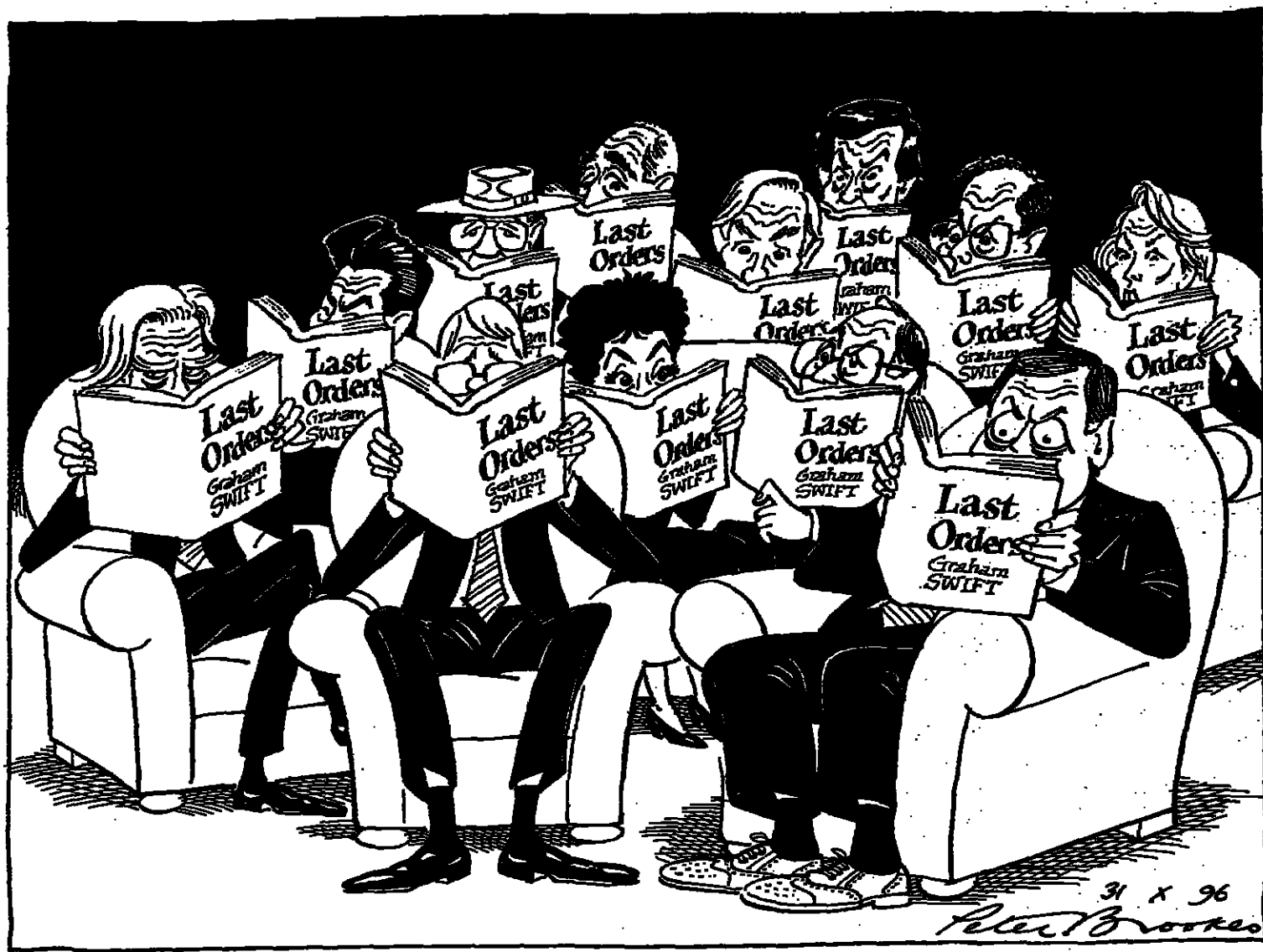
Finally, there is the fallacy that, because it is legal to do something, it must be acceptable to do it. We have become reluctant to condemn people exercising their legal rights. This confuses the liberal concern to limit the intrusion of the State with the issue of whether actions are right or wrong, beneficial or potentially harmful to society. One can maintain liberal limits on the powers of the State while yet taking a robust moral line about wrongdoing within the law.

The best way to support schools and parents in promoting moral development is by recognising these fallacies. This means putting responsibilities be-

fore rights. It means reviving our sense that we belong to a civic society with a shared moral code and a common culture. It means recognising that there is a moral dimension to every aspect of our lives. The underclass, run-down council estates and "sink schools" are not the only manifestations of the problem. We must also examine the morality of the rich and the powerful, and of public life and business.

At one end of the spectrum is the libertarian view that only individuals matter and the market will answer even moral questions. At the other end, there is the pseudo-Marxist cultural relativism which rejects traditional moral codes as a bourgeois imposition, sees "judgmentalism" as the greatest sin, and accepts whatever debased lifestyle it encounters. Both have been immensely damaging over the past 30 years. Neither enables schools and parents to do the things that society legitimately expects of them.

I sense we are coming to a turning point. Dunblane, Frances Lawrence's recent statement, the Prince of Wales's call for a genuine celebration of the millennium, and the national forum on values may be helping to create a new national mood. Sustaining this mood is as important as any programme of action for schools. In the end it will be the attitudes and assumptions of the wider society, and its support (or lack of it) that determine such a programme's success.



## Haunted by the unborn

Since 1973, there have been 30 million abortions in America. Now Winning v. Blair is making it a political issue here

Cardinal Thomas Winning, the leader of the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland, has made abortion a serious political issue in Britain. We shall need to take another look at Roe v. Wade, 1973, the case in which the Supreme Court of the United States decided to create a hitherto unknown constitutional right to abortion, the so-called right to choose. Whatever view one takes of its merits, the consequences of that decision have been formidable. The United States now has approximately one and a half million abortions a year, the great majority of them — over 85 per cent — killing healthy fetuses. In the 23 years since Roe v. Wade, there have been a total of 30 million. Three out of ten conceptions in the United States end in the destruction of the fetus.

The sheer scale of these figures may be one reason why the Americans see this as an urgent political issue in a way that most people in Britain have not. Proportionate to the population, the number of abortions in America is about twice that in Britain. The Supreme Court has been responsible for a veritable genocide of American infants, comparable in number to the deaths for which Stalin, Hitler or Mao were responsible. Five times as many American babies have died as a result of Roe v. Wade as Jews were killed in the Holocaust. Even in Britain, these deaths, more than 3 million in the past 30 years, have exceeded the battlefield deaths of both world wars. They are the missing generation.

Robert Bork, the American judge who was rejected as a Supreme Court Justice by the Senate in 1987, has made a cogent legal case against the Roe v. Wade judgment. In his 1990 book, *The Tempting of America*, he comments:

In an opinion of just over 51 pages, Justice Blackmun, writing for a majority of seven justices, employed the right of privacy to strike down the abortion laws of most states and to set severe limitations upon the state's power to regulate the subject at all. From the beginning of the Republic until that date, January 22, 1973, the moral question of what abortion should be lawful had been left entirely to state legislatures. The discovery this late in our history that the question was not one for democratic decision but one of constitutional law was so implausible that it certainly deserved a 51-page explanation. Unfortunately in the entire opinion there is not one line of explanation, not one sentence, that qualifies as legal argument. Nor has the Court in the 16 years

since ever provided the explanation lacking in 1973. It is unlikely that it ever will, because the right to abort, whatever one thinks of it, is not to be found in the Constitution.

There is another warning here for Britain. The 10th Amendment to the American Constitution was passed as early as 1791, among the very first group of amendments; it reads: "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people." This was an early attempt to give constitutional protection to the principle which in Europe has been called "subsidiarity". Manifestly, the 10th Amendment has failed to protect the right of the individual states to decide matters appropriate to them. Before Roe v. Wade, the states had different laws on abortion, some more liberal, some more conservative. The power to make their own laws on abortion was arbitrarily taken away from them. That was a ruthless blow against the democracy of the individual states, and we have to expect similar judicial activism from the European Court.

Robert Bork, who by an irony taught law at Yale to Bill and Hillary Clinton, has now written a second book, *Slouching towards Gomorrah*, which is currently a bestseller in the United States. He attacks what he sees as the corruption and decline of American culture, a decline which can be observed in Britain as well. His view is pessimistic: "For the immediate future, what we probably face is an increasingly vulgar, violent, chaotic and politicised culture." Many people in Britain also fear this state of affairs; they are at the centre of the present anxieties.

Judge Bork regards abortion as one aspect of the loss of concern for human life. The systematic killing of unborn children in huge numbers is part of a general disregard for human life that has

been growing for some time. Abortion by itself did not cause that disregard, but it certainly deepens and legitimises the nihilism that is spreading in our culture and finds killing for convenience acceptable. We are crossing lines, at first slowly, and now with rapidity: killing unborn children for convenience; removing tissue from live fetuses; contemplating creating embryos for destruction in research; considering taking organs from living encephalic babies; experimenting with assisted suicide; and contemplating euthanasia. Abortion has coarsened us.

I am not sure that abortion will remain so largely a non-political issue in Britain, though even in America the actual consequences are hard to judge. Bill Clinton is unquestionably the pro-abortion candidate for the presidency, having even vetoed

the Bill that would have prohibited late-term abortions; they are simply a cruel way of killing viable babies at the point of birth. Yet he has a much larger majority among women than among men. One has to remember that abortion is traumatic and imposes a great responsibility on women. Those who have been through the experience are more likely to vote for candidates who support their moral judgment than for those who condemn it. If Tony Blair's position in the abortion debate were to become a campaign issue, that would certainly win for Labour pro-abortion votes as well as losing anti-abortion votes.

If one takes the party leaders as typical, and one probably can, abortion seems to be a left-wing feminist and libertarian cause. Tony Blair has voted pro-abortion 13 times since he became an MP, has abstained 15 times and has never voted against. He is not the embryo's friend. Paddy Ashdown has voted pro-abortion 12 times, abstained 7 times, and voted against 9 times. John Major has voted pro-abortion 4 times, abstained 23 times and voted against 9 times. A similar pattern of the Democrats

being pro-choice and Republicans pro-life can be found in America.

In the past week there has been a difference of emphasis inside the Roman Catholic hierarchy. The English bishops specifically and strongly condemned abortion, but warned against making it the single deciding issue in whether to vote for a particular candidate. Cardinal Winning has frankly criticised Tony Blair's position, and seemed to be making a polite correction of the position of the English bishops. Tony Blair himself adopts the position that he is personally opposed to abortion, but believes it is a matter of choice for the mother, not a matter for the criminal law. Eight years ago he even opposed David Alton's Bill to reduce the limit for abortion from 28 to 18 weeks. That was surely wrong, as 28 weeks is now a viable term for many premature babies.

One difficulty with his argument is that abortion is not simply a choice for the mother, but has become a substantial medical industry, a very large one in the United States and quite a large one in Britain. Even those who think that abortion is morally acceptable in itself, and many people obviously do think that, might well still want to lay down the conditions in which that industry should operate. David Alton's Bill did not strike at the principle of abortion, but it did seek to regulate the age at which fetuses could be aborted. That sort of regulation is surely an appropriate job for Parliament, whatever view one takes of abortion itself. Pope John Paul II has included abortion and euthanasia in condemning what he terms "the culture of death", a phrase which has been repeated by the Roman Catholic bishops. Robert Bork sees Roe v. Wade as a very significant part of their death culture, and also as one of the causes of the new barbarism of the United States. He takes the title of his new book from William Butler Yeats's 1919 poem "The Second Coming". The poem is famous because it expresses so many people's fears.

More anarchy is loosed upon the world, The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere the ceremony of innocence is drowned; The best lack all conviction, while the worst are full of passionate intensity... And what rough beast, its hour come round at last, Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?

William Rees-Mogg

## Return of the native

Andrew Neil must heed the Scots, says Magnus Linklater

Stushie is a good Scots word meaning an uproar or commotion, often associated with someone or something stirring things up. It is a fair description of the reaction to this week's announcement that Andrew Neil has been appointed Editor-in-Chief of *The Scotsman* and its sister publications in Edinburgh. Not since Oliver Cromwell headed north in 1650 has there been such a fluttering in the dovecotes.

This is, of course, partly to do with Mr Neil's reputation as a man of forceful opinions, not noted for his sensitivity towards those who question them. But is also a matter of timing. The appointment comes at a politically delicate moment, six months before an election, when the four major parties north of the border are staking out their positions, when vulnerabilities are being exposed, when a newspaper with strong views strongly expressed might just have a significant impact on the result.

It is a scenario Mr Neil will recognise and relish. As his new autobiography reveals, he is clear about the social and political responsibilities of a newspaper and its editor. "Readers should be left in no doubt what their newspaper believes on the major issues of the day," he writes, "and its attitude to current events should, in turn, be determined by a broad set of principles which guide its outlook on life."

The principles which inform his own views, and therefore those adopted by *The Sunday Times*, were the need to challenge the post-war Establishment, which he blamed for Britain's decline; support for the market economics which, properly applied, had the potential to produce a social revolution; the belief that Margaret Thatcher had been broadly right but had not gone far enough. Mr Neil is a staunch supporter of the Union, of privatisation, deregulation and the old grammar schools. He derides the entrenched attitudes of the trade unions, the monarchy, the House of Lords, the established church, the welfare state, the law, medicine, inherited wealth and the liberal establishment.

He fought the closure of Paisley Grammar School, where he was educated. In his book he describes gleefully how, in 1987, he appealed directly to Mrs Thatcher and succeeded in outmanoeuvring the then Scottish Secretary, Malcolm Rifkind, who was initially unwilling to intervene. The school was saved. "The left-wing press, especially the *Glasgow Herald* and *The Scotsman*," he writes, "were spitting blood."

This, then, is the empire Mr Neil has inherited. Pretty well every one of his attitudes is the exact opposite of what it represents. We are in for some interesting times.

Of course shaking up a complacent Establishment is part of the function of a good newspaper. There would have been no dissent from that principle from the newspaper that Harold Evans had once edited, despite the contempt expressed by Mr Neil for the "once fashionable, increasingly dated left-wing views" which he considered typical of *The Old Sunday Times*. It too had a natural scepticism of all established institutions, whether of Left or Right. But it did regard detachment as a journalistic virtue. It pursued interesting stories for its own sake, rather than for some ideological goal. It never, so far as I can recall, saw its primary role as an engine of social or political change. And its leading articles tended to explore the issues of the day rather than sounding a weekly clarion call.

Mr Neil's idea of the conviction newspaper is more in tune with the mood of the British press today than with the press of the distant pre-Thatcher days. Watched by anxious politicians, monitored by spin-doctors, the press bears more directly on the political process than ever before. To back Blair, to abandon Major, to align with the Euro-sceptics or embrace the single currency — these have become the indicators of a newspaper's character, far more than a reputation for painstaking investigation or well-written features.

Which makes Mr Neil's new enterprise that much more interesting. He is right to say that the Scottish media present a rather uniform view of the political and social scene. Broadly devolutionist, marginally left of centre, by instinct statist, defensive of Scottish institutions and distrustful of change, the papers might well benefit from a few more challenges. The Scottish Secretary, Michael Forsyth — the Andrew Neil of Scottish politics — has achieved much by questioning some of the Scots' more cherished assumptions. But he has not been loved for it. The close relationship that any decent newspaper establishes with loyal readers is a thing of long-term interest, and one interferes at one's peril. As with a marriage, its secrets may not always be discernible to an outsider, but should be respected. Mr Neil should spend his first few months in Scotland listening carefully rather than shouting too loudly. Although he is returning to will be unfamiliar territory, "Gang warily" is another good Scots expression.

## Still waving

WHO NEEDS *Britannia* when you can have Prince Michael of Kent? In Rio de Janeiro for the first stopover of the BT Global Challenge, old "sea-legs" Kent has asked to help to man a yacht for the 1,200 mile-long stretch between New Zealand and Australia.

The Prince hopes to join the crew of *Ocean Rover* on the round-the-world yacht race. He is underlined by warnings that he will have to hunker down with the rest of the crew, sharing bunk-beds and doing his share of the night-watch.

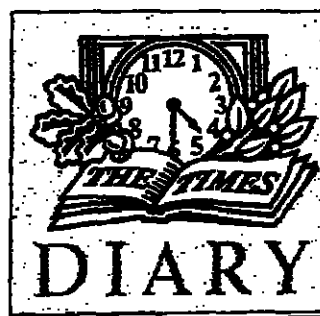
He has asked Chay Blyth, the race director, for permission to join the *Rover* on the third leg of the race. The passage is renowned for its heaving swells which give rise to biliousness among the less experienced. Sailing is expected to last a week.

The Prince's choice of *Ocean Rover*, a boat sponsored by the Rover Group, may be connected with his visit to a motorshow in São Paulo, where Rover is exhibiting. Unlike other crew members, who have paid up to £18,850 to sail round the world, he is not expected to pay for his passage.

To date, the yacht's record has been unimpressive. Two weeks

ago, *Ocean Rover* came to a grinding halt in mid-ocean when it crashed into a large shark, killing the beast. More recently, the boat came close to being washed up on the beach at Copacabana, when she drifted perilously close to the surf coming into Rio.

Indian heritage experts are flapping their pantaloons after discovering that the remains of the



noted 19th-century Urdu poet, Sheikh Mohammad Ibrahim Zauq, lie buried under one of Delhi's largest public lavatories. The Indian Supreme Court has ordered an inquiry into the unhappy circumstances, and demands that the toilets, which were built on his grave in 1961, be replaced with a more fitting national monument.

### Bald truth

TITTERS spread like measles through the stalls at Covent Garden yesterday during the Royal Opera House's dress rehearsal of *Don Giovanni*.

Alison Hagley, due to sing the part of Don Giovanni's intended, Zerlina, was indisposed. In stepped staff director Andrew Sinclair, handsome enough — but shortish,

male and balding.

Thomas Allen, who is celebrating his 25th anniversary year at Covent Garden, remained a model Don during the wowing scene, carrying Sinclair's bald head as if nothing more precious existed in the universe.

The belly laughs only began when the surtitles flashed up his amorous libretto, all about how he loved to run his fingers through it Zerlina's hair.

After his Booker Prize triumph



on Tuesday night, Graham Swift awoke yesterday morning with a head-splitting hangover. By the afternoon, he was cheery again. "I decided to carry on, and to drink my way out of it," he slurred.

### Cattywalk

NAOMI CAMPBELL, the siren from Streatham, has thrown a wobbly. She has backed out of a show in New York's Fashion Week for the designer Mark Whitaker, failing to turn up for her fitting for the event, which is a tribute to black models. Her representative says that she was never booked; others say that her team thought the show to be beneath her, with not enough models of super-status.

Naomi is also being hotly-toity about a show on Friday, and has said she won't appear unless she's allowed the most prestigious position — first on and last off the catwalk. One further condition: that Tyra Banks, a catwalk rival, isn't allowed to follow her down the runway.

### Hair-raiser

CONGRATULATIONS to Jennifer Flowers, the one-time lounge singer, owner of the biggest hair south of the Mason-Dixon line,



Gennifer: won't be inviting Bill to the wedding

and alleged former lover of Bill Clinton. On November 2 she is to marry Firis Shelmut, an institutional broker. Shelmut, who wears a moustache, is a former in-law of Clinton's former Arkansas cronny and Deputy US Attorney General, Webster Hubbell.

Hubbell has since stepped down from his government post for a spell in jail. Clinton, who was forced by Miss Flowers's allegations into admitting that his marriage had not been all it might have been, has not been invited to the wedding.

P-H-S



صلى الله عليه وسلم



## THE WRONG WAY

Higher interest rates will damage the economy

Kenneth Clarke has made a serious mistake in agreeing to the Bank of England's demand for an increase in the base rate. The seriousness of the Chancellor's error should not be judged by the small magnitude of yesterday's move. On its own, a quarter point rise in interest rates is not going to make much difference to the economy, especially since it is unlikely to be matched by any change in home mortgage costs. But anyone inclined to hope that yesterday's increase "had better be it", to recall the words of Jeremy Hanley the last time Mr Clarke embarked on a round of rate increases in 1994, must be even more naive than the former Conservative Chairman.

Once interest rates start rising, they tend to increase by at least one or two percentage points before they again stabilise. Mr Clarke's last monetary tightening, which the Chancellor referred to yesterday as the paradigm of a successful "pre-emptive move" against inflation, took interest rates up by 1.5 per cent between November 1994 and February 1995. Even if Mr Clarke proves more circumspect this time than he was two years ago, it is probably wishful thinking to assume that this rate increase will be the last before the general election. This is the clear lesson of experience: no round of monetary tightening since the 1960s has involved an increase of less than 1.5 per cent. It is also logical from an economic point of view.

The inflationary pressure that motivated an increase in interest rates, is not going to be removed until the rate increase has a substantial economic impact. And until the economic impact of higher rates becomes apparent in the statistics, the demands for monetary tightening from the City and the Bank of England, which prompted the original rate are only going to intensify. The markets' appetite for higher rates often grows with the feeding.

Businessmen, investors and homeowners should therefore brace themselves for further rate increases, including higher mortgage rates, between now and the general election. Tory backbenchers had better prepare themselves for an election in which they cannot even boast about the Government's one previously unquestionable achievement — the maintenance of low and steady interest rates. Yesterday's small move, therefore, is bound to affect Britain's entire political and economic landscape — and in ways which will be damaging not only to the Government's re-election prospects but also to the national interest.

The political implications of this move are even clearer. Mr Clarke presumably hopes that his toughness yesterday will increase his anti-inflationary credibility, allowing him more scope to cut taxes in the Budget. The Chancellor insists, of course, that his Budget will be the model of prudence. But if it were not for the election and if the economy were genuinely in danger of overheating — which is by no means clear — Mr Clarke could have taken the necessary anti-inflationary action in the Budget by cutting public spending and, if necessary, raising taxes, instead of pushing up interest rates.

The economic impact of higher rates is more complex. Confidence will be dented eventually, but the main effects will, as usual, be on investment and exports. Sterling, which has already risen by 7 per cent in the last two months, is likely to appreciate further, making British exports less profitable and eliminating all hope of investment-led growth. Construction and manufacturing will suffer disproportionately, while services will benefit. The healthy rebalancing of the British economy in favour of manufacturing, which began so painfully after Black Wednesday, will be thrown into reverse. Instead, the country will be back on the well-trodden path towards the imbalances, trade deficits and the budgetary crises of the ERM period. Yesterday's step may have been a small one, but it was clearly in the wrong direction.

## THE REAL PRIZES

Selection is necessary, not nostalgic

The publication of another Education Bill has now become as much an autumn ritual as the end of British Summer Time. This year's has already been characterised as another exercise in turning the clock back. The Education Secretary's opponents have delighted in the nostalgic nostalgia displayed by her floundering of the case. Similar rhetoric has been deployed to damn the centenary of her Bill — an extension of selection — with Labour caricaturing it as a return to the 11-plus.

The reality is different. Three painful decades after the comprehensive experiment began the lesson is slowly being relearned that schools should be academic institutions and not playgrounds for social engineers. In the Sixties, pious egalitarians, guilt-stricken at the advantages private education had secured for them, opposed selection as the most obvious affront to their levelling spirit. As Melanie Phillips has noted in *All Must Have Prizes*, educationists were driven by allegiance to an abstract notion of equality which meant none could be seen to fail.

Ms Phillips has rightly drawn attention to the debilitating effect of moral relativism and progressive teaching methods. But the guilty men and women in the classroom had their accomplices in Westminster. Institutions and examinations which defended academic achievement, such as grammar schools and the O-level, were replaced by the comprehensive and the GCSE, both designed to cushion those who did not learn from the consequences of their failure.

Selection is, not in itself, a solution to thirty years of hurt. Its extension, however,

## KREMLIN SICKNESS

Gorbachev sends a message home from London

Mikhail Gorbachev's call on President Yeltsin to resign comes as no surprise. The former Soviet President has an antipathy to his successor in the Kremlin, based on personal slights, wounded pride and deep political antagonism. In *The Times*/Dillon's forum on Tuesday night he blamed Mr Yeltsin for pulling Russia out of the Soviet Union, precipitating the break-up of the Soviet state. He has contempt for the economic reforms which he says have benefited only 10 per cent of the population. He admires General Aleksandr Lebed as a man of honour, action and integrity — mainly, it seems, because he presents the greatest challenge to Boris Yeltsin.

Mr Gorbachev's call on the Russian leader to admit that his health is too poor to continue in office must, therefore, be seen in the context of their embittered relations. Nevertheless, it makes some trenchant points. He urges Mr Yeltsin to spare Russia the infighting that, he recalls from personal experience, so paralysed the Soviet Union in the wasted years of the Brezhnev-Andropov-Chernenko gerontocracy. Russia cannot afford a prolonged interregnum; the constitution is too new, the precedents too few and democracy too brittle to survive determined assaults on its structures by would-be leaders. Mr Gorbachev argues that only a new election could restore legitimacy.

Mr Yeltsin's supporters, however, insist that the President was fairly elected and is entitled to his term in office as long as his health permits. There is no evidence that he

is too incapacitated to govern: he has shown that even from his sick-bed he is not too ill to take tough decisions, including the sacking of Mr Lebed and the stripping of General Aleksandr Korzhakov, his corrupt former aide, of his military duties. The medical team will make its decision next week. It may find Mr Yeltsin ready for an operation, from which he may make a full and reasonably speedy recovery.

Nevertheless, Mr Gorbachev has touched on the most sensitive question: the legitimacy and power of those who are ruling in Mr Yeltsin's name. What particularly angers Mr Gorbachev, who claims now to speak for the average citizen, is the corruption that has infiltrated the government machine and the shameless pursuit of profits by the privileged few at the expense of the many. He still dreams of some "third way", neither communist nor capitalist, that appears to be a vague version of Swedish social democracy. If reform had come more gradually, he believes, the excesses so visible today could have been avoided.

Perhaps the West is inclined to be charitable to Mr Gorbachev because of the way the last Soviet leader, with so little bloodshed, ended the division of Europe. But his economic message now is no more compelling than were his botched economic policies when in office. It is as an astute observer of his country's turbulent politics, and as a continuing passionate advocate of the primacy of democratic freedoms, that he still commands respect.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

### Teaching morals, virtue and self-worth to the young

From Vice-Admiral Sir Ian McGeeoch

Sir, There seems to be a problem in many schools with teaching anything at all, let alone virtue ("Virtue must be taught", October 29). To maintain good order (which children appreciate) as the norm, discipline and authority are indispensable, and where disorder prevails nothing will be learned.

Parents and teachers, both, should accept that the healthy infant and growing child push out continually in all directions seeking the limits of behaviour. If these are not imposed firmly and consistently adolescent neurosis sets in. "Let's drop some context on the motorway and see if that will get a reaction."

Discipline is neither arbitrary nor repressive but called for by the nature of the task — one person trying to convey knowledge to a group, and authority must support discipline. In a secular state the source of such authority is the government, but its potency and credibility depend upon the influence of revealed religion.

Yours truly,  
IAN MCGEOCH,  
Kirk Deighton House,  
Kirk Deighton, Wetherby, Yorkshire.  
October 29.

From Mr R. N. Gregg

Sir, Things will change just as soon as enough people, ordinary people, stop asking "what are they going to do about it?" and start asking "what are we going to do about it?"

Yours faithfully,  
RICHARD GREGG,  
27 Woodhill Road, Portishead, Bristol.  
October 29.

From Dr Ben Wood

Sir, Your leader today, "Virtue must be taught" will strike a positive chord with most of your readers; it is not the application of self-evident truths in today's society that is the difficulty?

I was a very good little boy at my boarding school, something of a teacher's pet. My housemaster, however, was in the mould of Philip Lawrence and insisted that obedience to the rules did not mean that one was a "wet" weakling.

As you say, "Today's children will need power to exercise any kind of will

in the coming world..." They will need to be shown that good behaviour is not to be decreed but that it requires the high moral and physical courage so sadly but wonderfully displayed by Philip Lawrence.

Yours faithfully,  
BEN WOOD,  
3 Kingsfield, Lymington, Hampshire.  
October 29.

From Mr W. A. L. Smith

Sir, Francis Lawrence's statement has started some sort of national debate on establishing new moral codes and, understandably, church leaders and politicians are addressing this aspect of it.

However, what stood out for me was when she quoted her husband as feeling that "perhaps young people today feel unchallenged and undervalued. It is only when you are challenged and therefore achieve something that life becomes worth living" (report, October 19).

I think this is profoundly true and what could be more challenging than forming your own Triad gang and recruiting others into it? Or making your own petrol bomb and seeing what happens when you throw it into a car?

Most youngsters probably do find life interesting and challenging if they are sufficiently academic or good at sport or music, but generally speaking it is the rest who play truant and get into trouble.

There is great scope for inventiveness in providing them with challenges. One possibility that comes to mind is to allow a group, with proper supervision and protection, to demolish an unsightly building that is awaiting development. Vandals do this already, but why not do it under controlled conditions?

Yours faithfully,  
Wm. A. L. SMITH,  
Woodlands, Wearage Lane,  
Norton, Dover, Kent.  
October 30.

From Mrs Mary Whitehouse

Sir, You are to be congratulated on giving such generous publicity to the aims of Francis Lawrence's campaign for a nationwide movement for change and to her "vision for a better

society" which surely touches all hearts.

She says that the media "have a responsibility to face up to the consequences of their increasing reliance on an insidious barbarity" ("Manifesto", October 21). Indeed, The National Viewers' and Listeners' Association published a report in August this year entitled *More Cruelty and Violence 2*, which analysed 200 films shown on the four terrestrial television channels.

Our monitors listed as weapons of violence every kind of firearm and variety of knife. Other offensive weapons included truncheons, razors, stakes, crossbows, machetes, axes, snooker cues, tyre levers and metal bars, and all in the name of entertainment.

One of the sad aspects of all this is that the Broadcasting Standards Council is not very helpful, even though its function is to monitor the portrayal of violence, sex and bad language.

Perhaps one can best conclude by quoting from its own code on the "portrayal of violence". It concludes "that a society which takes delight in or encourages brutality or cruelty (physical or mental) for their own sakes puts its civilised values at risk". Indeed.

Yours faithfully,  
MARY WHITEHOUSE  
(Founder and President Emerita),  
National Viewers' and  
Listeners' Association,  
All Saints House,  
High Street, Colchester, Essex.  
October 30.

From Mr John Drake

Sir, Mr Major has promised to back Francis Lawrence's campaign for a national movement against violence and to promote good citizenship.

Does this mean he will now reject the policies which the Tory Government have pursued for the past 17 years, and its "one first" ethos, which have done so much to damage our society and to create the conditions in which social irresponsibility, lawlessness and violence breed?

Yours sincerely,  
JOHN DRAKE,  
32 Stonechat Road, Billericay, Essex.  
October 28.

### Logic obscured by emotion in decision to ban handguns

From Mr J. L. Holmes

Sir, I have seldom read such a poor argument for "blanket gun control" as that presented by Donald Dewar, MP ("Parliament needs a free vote on guns", October 29).

The families of Dunblane deserve our sympathy and few of us, thankfully, will ever experience the depths of their pain and sorrow. But to express such sympathy by banning all handguns flies in the face of objective reason and ignores the thrust of the Cullen report.

The Dunblane tragedy happened, not because of legally-held handguns, but because a suspected paedophile reacted insanely to well-justified local complaints about his behaviour with children.

Despite verbal and written representations to the police regarding Hamilton's unsuitability to hold a handgun licence, he had been repeatedly granted licences for an increasing range of guns.

Two points are clear. Had the police carried out their responsibilities properly under existing laws at the time, Hamilton would never have held any legal weapons. Secondly, even if he had been denied guns, it is not inconceivable that Hamilton would have found an alternative method of mass murder. Handgun-ban legislation is unnecessary in the former case and futile in the latter.

A total handgun ban is proposed ostensibly to prevent any more Dun-

blanes. I would suggest that the current paedophile register legislation is much more likely to achieve this admirable end, because suspected paedophiles would already be on police files and should automatically be denied any weapon licence as a result.

Mr Dewar would do better to apply some logic to this debate rather than allow his emotional reaction to cloud his reason.

Yours sincerely,  
J. L. HOLMES,  
Grosvenor House, Grosvenor Street,  
Grimby, Humberside.  
October 29.

From Mr Keith G. N. Nicholson

Sir, The most worrying effect of a handgun ban is likely to be the increase in illegally held guns. These are already cheaper on the black market than in gun shops.

Two parallels should act as a caution. Prohibition of alcohol in America led to soaring crime and a huge loss of revenue to the Government. Although huge sums are being spent to curb illegal drug use in Britain, consumption is increasing, regardless of the law, and the street price is falling (but still at a level where crime is often needed to support the habit).

I do not advocate that drugs be unrestricted but if their provision is regulated by the State, as Dr Cresswell suggests (letter, October 30), then the black market dies, crime falls and society has a better chance of controlling

their use and, more importantly, helping addicts.

Banning guns is the easy emotional reaction but so doing may be costly to us all. The Government has lost control of drugs and a ban will lose it any control over guns.

Yours sincerely,  
KEITH G. N. NICHOLSON,  
The Old Stables, Hartley Mews,  
Hartley Wintney, Hampshire.  
October 30.

From Mr Chris Boylan

Sir, Our elected leaders, in dangerous dogs mode, are about to bounce into ill-considered legislation. Every sane human being shares the grief of the parents of Dunblane and that of Mrs Lawrence and her family.

The compassion and wisdom of that lady are a shining example in this grubby age. It is simply squalid to see our politicians vying for electoral advantage by trying to see who can find the best way to destroy the legitimate sport of pistol shooting and who can ban the most knives.

Members of Parliament may cover the paucity of their ideas with as many smoke-screens as they wish but nothing will convince me that sound policing and proper application of existing laws could not have prevented both tragedies.

Yours faithfully,  
CHRIS BOYLAN,  
33 Walden Avenue, Chislehurst, Kent.  
October 29.

From Viscountess Sidmouth

Sir, I applaud Lord Reed-Mogg's article of October 23 ("Bishops or party pawns?", letters, October 26). I am a committed, practising Roman Catholic, but I would sooner consult the Governor of the Bank of England on the Mystery of the Incarnation, than seek the advice of a bishop on the economics of a free market.

Furthermore, no matter how sound a parliamentary candidate's agenda may be on other matters, if they are at variance with Catholic teaching on an issue such as abortion, they would not have my vote. The bishops would do well, when giving advice, to "render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's" and unto God the things that are God's.

Sincerely,  
THERESA SIDMOUTH,  
Selwood House,  
Mells, Frome, Somerset.  
October 27.

From Mr Tony Hodges

Sir, My local branch of Barclays Bank is much nearer than Sainsbury's (report, October 26). It would be very handy for me if they started selling bacon, eggs and bread.

Yours faithfully,  
TONY HODGES,  
5 Cavendish Crescent North,  
The Park, Nottingham.

From the Chairman of the National Council on Gambling

Sir, The decision to allow a midweek lottery draw (report, October 24; letter, October 26) highlights the need to review the timing of its live television broadcast.

The Saturday draw, televised in the early evening, is the second most popular programme among 10 to 15-year-old children, with 38 per cent watching. The latest survey figures from Ofcom show that 18 per cent of under-age children purchase tickets. My own research indicates that the figure is a good deal higher.

At a time when politicians are striving to discourage undesirable behaviour among young people the future welfare of our children should be paramount.

From Mr T. Jacobs

Sir, Today's leading article, "Failing teachers" (see also letters, October 26), appears to accept "sink" schools as inevitable; it goes no further than to suggest that those who work in them be given special training.

But as the situation in Halifax so depressingly demonstrates, sink schools will arise where the policy supporting "a grammar school in every town" is implemented. Cream off all the more able youngsters, thus removing all

pupil models of academic achievement from within a school, and what should society expect from it?

The alternative is to establish large, well run, multi-disciplinary, multi-stream comprehensive schools in Halifax and wherever else the "sink" problem arises. Such schools welcome all levels of ability and motivate their pupils to give of their best. I know: I have enjoyed teaching in four of them.

Yours sincerely,  
T. JACOBS,  
8 Holmesdale Avenue, SW14.  
October 23.

From the Chairman of the National Council on Gambling

The law prohibiting children from taking part in the National Lottery needs to be more rigorously enforced; it should be clearly recognised that the lottery is adult entertainment. The draw should therefore be broadcast after the 9pm watershed and the age limit for the purchase of tickets raised from 16 to 18.

Yours faithfully,  
E. MORAN,  
Chairman,  
The National Council on Gambling,  
C/o Crowlands Priory Hospital,  
Southgate, N14.  
October 26.

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### Reasons to raise BBC licence fee

From Sir James Hann

Sir, As an industrialist, it surprises me that the debate over the funding of the BBC has so far paid meagre attention to what I see as the investment case for an increase in real terms in the licence fee.

An industrial company decides to step up investment according to whether the money is available, and there is a ready market for the product and the investment makes sense in the long term.

In the case of an increased licence fee, it is evident that these criteria are easily met. The money is available. As a nation we spend more on leisure pursuits each year. At 25p per day the licence fee is a fantastic value. The market is huge and growing, as the popularity of the (expensive) satellite television channels testifies.

Is it in the long-term interests of Britain? Given that, in my view, the BBC consistently beats all foreign national broadcasters in quality and value for money, the answer has to be a resounding yes. In addition, efficiency improvements over the last few years (Pennington, Business, October 8) have shown the BBC to be a good custodian of our money.

Any business which has raised output and improved quality as the BBC has, without increasing its prices in real terms for ten years, is in my view a worthy candidate for investment. One could argue that the licence fee is in need of urgent review, leading to a meaningful increase.

Yours sincerely,  
JAMES HANN  
(Chairman, Eurotherm plc),  
Bramley Cottage, Bullhouse Lane,  
Wroughton, nr Bristol, North Somerset.  
October 29.

### Influence of Opus Dei

From Mr Ian S. Menzies

Sir, Though not in total sympathy with all the views of Opus Dei, I welcome the fair account by Tunku Varadarajan ("Conservative and caring", October 26) — a long-overdue correction of long-standing slanders.

However, contrary to the implication of his article, Opus Dei's activities are by no means confined to Spain now and allegations of its secret influence in other countries are as distorted a version of the facts as they are in the case of Spain.

I also disagree with Mr Varadarajan's inclusion of the Jesuits among the orders "supposed to withdraw from the world". This is very far from the truth. The Society of Jesus has been closely and controversially involved in worldly affairs for hundreds of years, from 17th-century Paraguay to present-day liberation theology.

If Opus Dei can be labelled "proto-Thomistic", then Jesuit philosophy may be closer to "one nation" (or perhaps "one world"). But then, having been educated by Jesuits, I suppose I would say that.

Yours sincerely,  
IAN S. MENZIES (Publisher),  
Imprimatur,  
PO Box 31, Bognor Regis, Sussex.  
October 28.

### Chamberlain's policy

From Sir Richard Keane

Sir, Sir Nicholas Henderson's interpretation of Neville Chamberlain's appeasement policy (letter, October 24) is not, I believe, a true reflection of the Prime Minister's mind.

What was paramount in his mind was that Hitler could not be stopped by bluff and that England could not go to war without a united Empire. He believed that if the *cassus belli* could be represented as resistance to Hitler's efforts to bring all the German people of Europe within the one Reich then there would not be a united Empire.

I know this because the then Editor of *The Sunday Times*, W. W. Hadley, was in the habit of having each week a private conversation alone with the Prime Minister and he and I, as his assistant and diplomatic correspondent, would talk after these meetings.

Yours faithfully,  
RICHARD KEANE,  
Capppocquin, Co Waterford.  
October 25.

### Hell on wheels?

From Dr Margaret Gullan-Whur

Sir, Jemima Khan's comment after causing a car accident, "I am a terrible driver — always crashing into people" (Diary, October 26), is refreshingly frank but may not please her insurance company.

Other remarks which one hopes will not get back to insurers include my uncle's, that he always felt safe when driving since, "I have the wheel to hang on to, you see". A recent encounter on a narrow country lane brought a wound-down window and a crisp: "I hope you're not expecting me to go backwards. I'm much too old for that sort of thing."

My mother once asked, while driving: "What does that sign say?" The "sign" was a black and white cow leaning over a fence at the roadside.

Yours faithfully,  
MARGARET GULLAN-WHUR,  
Orange House,  
Heacham, Norfolk.  
October 26.

Letters for publication should carry contact telephone numbers. We regret that we cannot accept letters by telephone but they may be sent by fax to 0171-782 5046.







OBITUARIES

WILLIAM FORREST

William Forrest, foreign correspondent, died on October 28 aged 94. He was born on March 21, 1902.

William Forrest was the last, and one of the foremost, moving foreign correspondents of the old Fleet Street school in the days before the television camera substituted the immediate image for the considered word.

Willy Forrest, as he was always known, was a slight, dapper Scot whose quiet voice and disarming charm masked a steely determination to get the story, whatever the obstacles, and to ensure that it was printed without any "creative" sub-editing.

He first made his name with his coverage for the *Daily Express* of the Spanish Civil War, which began with Franco's attack on the Republican Government in July 1936. For more than two years Forrest reported the bloody battles from the Republican frontlines until the Fascists' victory in 1939, with one break. This happened in 1937 when he came back to London at the beleaguered Republicans' request to lobby Parliament for desperately-needed medical aid. "It's what I'm most proud of," said Forrest. But the *Express's* owner, the Conservative butler Lord Beaverbrook, despatched his mercy mission as "political intervention".

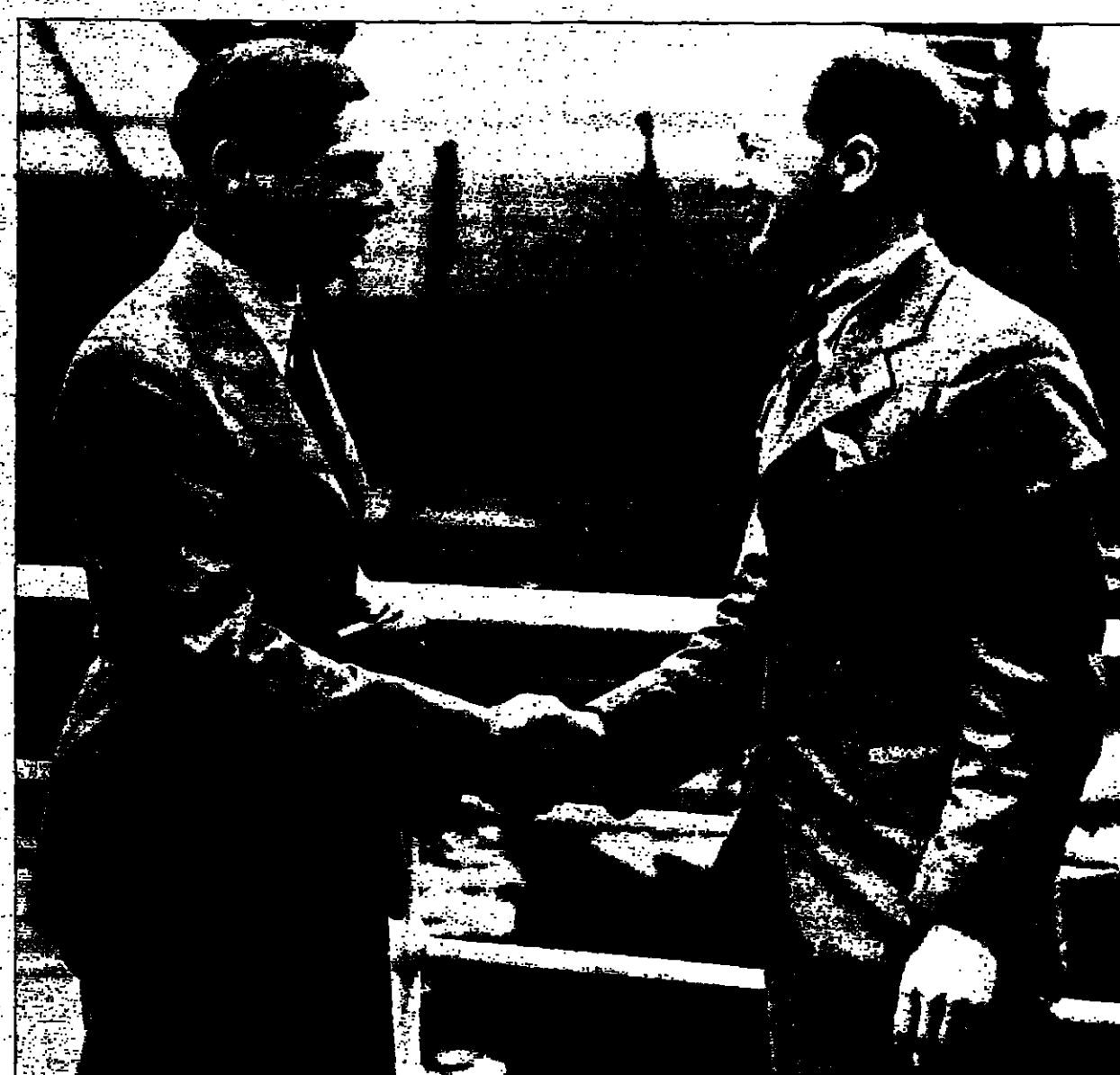
Forrest resigned immediately from the paper, whose right-wing stance had made life uncomfortable for such an ardent Leftist — still a member of the Communist Party — and joined the *New Chronicle*, whose other correspondent in Spain was Arthur Koestler. On that liberal daily Forrest was at last free to report the Civil War with all his conviction in the cool, authoritative style that was to mark him out among his peers.

From then on the battlefield was to become his beat. He was on the spot for the Nazi invasion of Poland, escaping

just in time through Romania. His next assignment was the Russo-Finnish war. Ironically, that campaign, in which the Red Army brutally overran tiny Finland to extend its border defences, sowed the seeds of his eventual disillusionment with the Marxist faith, in which he had, deep brought up, although he remained a socialist to the end.

As the Second World War began in earnest, Forrest covered each front in succession: the retreat from Dunkirk, the London Blitz, the Eighth Army's Desert campaign (he was wounded at Tobruk), the Allied landings in Sicily and Salerno, the Normandy landings, the Rhine crossing and the fall of Berlin. By the end he probably knew more of war than some of the generals he interviewed.

When peace came Forrest became the *New Chronicle's* chief correspondent in Paris, where he revelled in the editorial freedom to exploit his skills as analyst of the political and social problems of liberated France after five years of coping with the unenlightened censorship of the desk-bound Whitehall warriors. Finally, it was as the paper's diplomatic correspondent, with his unrivalled inside knowledge of the European corridors of power, that he was able to give the *New Chronicle* its reputation for informed insight.



William Forrest, right, greeting Arthur Koestler on the latter's return from a Fascist prison in Spain in May 1937

each week," he said, "paid for the bread that was our main food."

When he left school in 1917 at the age of 15, he had the choice of three jobs: one at a coal merchant's at ten shillings a week; another at a flour mill at seven shillings and sixpence; and the third as a copy boy at the Glasgow Herald at five and ninepence.

"The newspaper job," decided his far-seeing mother and took him to see the great man, the editor, in his Rennie Mackintosh office. But he never made copy boy. "Start on Monday as a sub-editor," said this shrewd judge of talent, whose last young journalist had just gone off to the Great War.

The "guy gleg halflin", to describe Forrest in the Scots tongue he loved to converse in (it means "very bright youngster"), was a natural linguist who spent his hours away from the sub's desk adding Russian (of course), Hebrew, Arabic and Greek to the French and Latin he had brought from school. (It was a proud moment for the self-taught polyglot when his only son George, celebrated Greek

SIR RODERICK BARCLAY

Sir Roderick Barclay, GCVO, KCMG, former Ambassador to Belgium and Denmark, died on October 24 aged 87. He was born on February 22, 1909.

Barclay began his diplomatic career in 1932 and served before the war in Brussels and in Paris. During the war itself he helped to represent the cause of the Free French to a sceptical US Administration.

There followed a long post-war period at home, including his time as head of the private office of the Foreign Secretary. After Bevin's retirement he stayed on to serve Herbert Morrison, whom personally and professionally he held in less regard. It was Barclay who first advised Morrison of the growing suspicion about Donald Maclean — who had in fact served under him in Paris and briefly in Washington. But Maclean, along with an unintended Guy Burgess, made his notorious flight before the net finally closed.

Barclay was appointed a Commander of the Victorian Order in 1953 after his work as head of the Foreign Office protocol department in helping to organise the Coronation. He was knighted for the first time two years later before going to Denmark as Ambassador. He was only 49.

He hosted two State visits, one while he was in Copenhagen, 1956-60, and again during his time in Brussels, 1963-69. In between these ambassadorial posts he was once more in London as a deputy under-secretary and "advisor on European trade questions". On retiring from the diplomatic service at the age of 60, Barclay joined the "family" bank, serving as non-executive chairman of its French subsidiary and as a director of Barclays International and of the Banque de Bruxelles.

Barclay's great strengths both as a diplomat and a businessman were his imperturbability in a crisis and his popularity. Subordinates, many of whom went on to reach high office themselves, received his total loyalty and trust, and repaid it in kind.

He remained a first-class shot throughout his life as well as being an accomplished fly fisherman. He took great pride when serving dinner at his Buckinghamshire home in pointing out that he had bagged the pheasant himself and grown the vegetables in his own garden. He was essentially a family man.

He married a cousin, Jean Gladstone, a kinswoman of the 19th-century Prime Minister, in 1934, and they celebrated their diamond wedding two years ago. She died earlier this year and Roddie Barclay, who never fully recovered from the loss, is survived by their son and three daughters.

RODDIE BARCLAY belonged to that generation of diplomats who, after the Second World War, helped to create the series of multilateral alliances which still provide a framework for international relations. He even called his spaniel Efta, after the European Free Trade Association.

He was later one of the so-called "flying knights" who under the leadership of Sir Pierson Dixon, Ambassador to France, tried in the early 1960s to negotiate Britain's entry to the Common Market — until President de Gaulle's notorious "non". However, despite also serving as envoy to two Nato allies, Barclay is still best remembered for the two years he spent between 1949 and 1951 as principal private secretary to the Labour Foreign Secretary, Ernest Bevin.

Surprised, if gratified, to be offered such a glittering prize, he told Bevin, on accepting the appointment, that he hoped he would be up to the demanding task. Bevin replied that if their partnership did not work out "you can consider it my fault". Barclay's duties as a fluent French speaker included having to translate restaurant menus. On the first occasion he was taken aback when the Foreign Secretary called for "some news with our dinner". He quickly discovered that this meant *Nuits St Georges*. But the chemistry between Barclay and Bevin worked so well that, despite their widely differing backgrounds, there developed a great mutual liking and respect. Barclay's short biography, *Ernest Bevin and the Foreign Office 1932-69*, written in retirement, provides one of the most endearing and illuminating cameos of Bevin.

Despite belonging to the seventh generation of the banking family, Roderick Edward Barclay was born in Japan where his father was a Church of England missionary. His mother, who at one time had given up hope of having children, was to die when Roddie was only three months old. Later he was sent back to England to board at Harrow School, spending holidays with relatives.



Sir Roderick Barclay and his pet spaniel, Efta

MICHAEL COTTRELL

Michael Cottrell, chairman of Matthew Clark and of Enterprise Inns, died of a heart attack on October 28 aged 57. He was born on December 24, 1938.

AN ARCHETYPAL gentle giant, Michael Cottrell was one of the best known and best liked figures in the drinks industry. After a 27-year-long career at Courage, during which it became one of the country's top brewers, he was later in demand as the part-time chairman of several smaller companies in the industry.

Each expanded rapidly under his leadership. In that role, aided by a 6ft 4in frame and a strong physical pres-

ence, he had the much-valued gift of being able to guide, encourage and, if necessary, rein in executives firmly, good-humouredly and without causing offence.

Cottrell was born into the drinks business. Saccone & Speed, the wines and spirits firm, was in the family. After education at Downside and at Magdalene College, Cambridge, where he earned a good law degree, in 1960 he started in the business and in Courage, which bought Saccone & Speed as part of the expansion of leading brewers into all aspects of the drinks industry.

The next two decades were a time of great opportunities for able young managers in the big new brewery combines.

But they were also a time when personal skills were at a premium amid the rivalries of regional dynasties of the old beaige brought together by the torrent of mergers. Cottrell's hard work and easy manner prospered in this tricky atmosphere and he moved swiftly up the ladder.

The fashion for mega-mergers then changed Cottrell's life, along with that of many other top managers. Courage, the product of mergers, was itself taken over by Imperial, the successful tobacco group that had turned itself into a less successful conglomerate. Battle-hardened Courage managers soon took a broader role, allowing Cottrell to emerge as a youthful managing director of the brewing and drinks division.

A second watershed came early in 1986. Cottrell's stewardship of Courage was cut short after Hanson, a more aggressive conglomerate, in turn gained control of Imperial, and rapidly dismembered it after a bitterly contested £2 billion takeover battle, then the biggest seen in Britain.

Courage was in good fettle, Hanson aimed to keep it and Cottrell, much exercised about the future of his division and its employees, was content to be one of the few top Imperial executives not shed by their new masters. Little more than a year later, however, he decided to move on soon after Hanson opportunistically accepted an offer for Courage from the Australian owners of Fosters.

At the relatively early age of 50, Cottrell was to embark on a new career as an elder statesman, guiding and leading rather than managing. After brief, unconvincing spells

as a head-hunter and as chairman of First Leisure, his authority, good sense and friendly disposition made him a popular choice for the boards of drinks firms, not least among their bankers and institutional shareholders. He variously became chairman of Matthew Clark, Enterprise Inns and, until conflicts of interest arose, Taunton Cider.

Clark, a long-standing but modest family drinks producer-distributor, was starting to expand rapidly under Peter Aikens, who had been Cottrell's production director at Courage. Enterprise is one of the leading independent pub-owning companies that owe their rapid growth to the limits placed on the big brewers' estates.

Taunton had been owned by a consortium of brewers, including Courage, before it gained its independence and later, when Cottrell was at the helm, won its own stock market flotation. Last year it was absorbed by Matthew Clark and ran into trading difficulties. Cottrell was due to tell shareholders of plans to deal with them the morning after his fatal heart attack.

His new career certainly did not make Cottrell's life any less hectic or give more time for passions such as shooting and gardening at his home in Kent. But it did allow him the pleasure of regaining control of the original part of the family business. He bought the Gibraltar operation of Saccone & Speed from the new owners of Courage.

Cottrell is survived by his wife Amanda, a Justice of the Peace, two daughters and two sons, one an executive of a top drinks group, the other working in Gibraltar.



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**THE BLACKWALL TUNNEL**

Messrs S. Pearson and Son, the contractors to the London County Council for the Blackwall Tunnel, yesterday entertained a large party to luncheon, which was served under the bed of the Thames, to celebrate the successful completion of the subaqueous portion of the undertaking. Among those who were invited to inspect the works were the chairman and many members of the London County Council, Earl Russell, the Earl of Onslow, Sir Joseph Savory, Sir James Kinson, Sir Alexander Rendel, Mr. George Livesey, Mr. J.W. Macdure, M.P., the Mayor of Colchester, Sir John Colom, and Sir Saul Samuel. Visitors were taken over the tunnel and there were guides in abundance to explain the methods and appliances employed in carrying out this difficult piece of engineering. These have already been described in *The Times* (December 20, 1894). The pneumatic shield, without which the work would have been impossible, was naturally of great interest and the adventurous were enabled to get some notion for themselves of the pleasures of being in compressed air, though the pressure was only a trifle above that of the atmosphere instead of being 35lb, as it had to be during a great part of the excavation. Though the passage under the river is now

**ON THIS DAY**

October 31, 1895

Luncheon was served beneath the Thames as the Blackwall Tunnel neared completion. The building of the tunnel was superintended by Sir Alexander Binnie, chief engineer to the London County Council; the contractor was Westman Pearson, later Viscount Cowdray.

complete, except that it is not yet lined with white brick and the roadway is not formed, there remains much more to be done, and it is unlikely that the tunnel will be ready for traffic for 18 months yet. On the north side some 1,200 ft of tunnel have yet to be made and, though this part is not under water, the engineers are by no means sure that it will not give considerable trouble. The difficulties will not, however, be of so alarming a character as those that had to be faced under the river, where in some places the heads of the workmen were only about 5ft from the bottom

of the stream, and where, moreover, the work had to be carried on in water-logged gravel which it was impossible to drain. The river, indeed, did burst in twice, but was ultimately vanquished by means of the compressed air, which was able to withstand the pressure of water sometimes nearly 50ft deep. Amongst other untoward incidents that occurred may be mentioned that the shield, when being forced forward by hydraulic rams capable of exerting a pressure of 4,800 tons, came into contact with a rock, and was so knocked out of shape as to cost some £10,000 to repair. But, in spite of such accidents, and of the gloomy prognostications of failure made by some experienced engineers, Messrs. Pearson have accomplished what promised to be by far the most difficult part of the undertaking. On this they may well be congratulated, as well as on the immunity from fatal accidents which they have enjoyed. No workman has been killed either by falling off scaffolds (for which the two deep shafts at each end afford abundant opportunity) or by mishaps from the machinery; nor has there been any death from the effects of compressed air. This, no doubt, is due to the care with which the men were medically examined before being allowed to work under the high pressures which were at times necessary.



TODAY				TODAY			
	AM	HT	PM		AM	HT	PM
London Bridge	4:19	7:07	4:06	7:0	4:13	5:5	6:58
Abandon	3:40	4:40	4:05	4:0	Liverpool	4:13	5:7
Armstrong	3:31	4:23	4:05	11:8	Lewiston	4:13	5:7
Ballad	3:41	4:23	4:05	11:8	Lowell	4:13	5:7
Cardi	3:42	4:12	10:02	10:0	Milford Haven	4:13	5:7
Champion	3:42	4:12	10:02	10:0	Milford Haven	4:13	5:7
Dover	3:42	4:12	10:02	10:0	Milford Haven	4:13	5:7
Dublin (In Wale)	3:42	4:12	10:02	10:0	Milford Haven	4:13	5:7
Edinburgh	3:42	4:12	10:02	10:0	Milford Haven	4:13	5:7
Greenock	3:42	4:12	10:02	10:0	Milford Haven	4:13	5:7
Hawthorn	3:42	4:12	10:02	10:0	Milford Haven	4:13	5:7
Heddon	3:42	4:12	10:02	10:0	Milford Haven	4:13	5:7
High (Alford Dy)	3:42	4:12	10:02	10:0	Milford Haven	4:13	5:7
Shrewsbury	3:42	4:12	10:02	10:0	Milford Haven	4:13	5:7
King's Lynn	3:42	4:12	10:02	10:0	Milford Haven	4:13	5:7

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Sun. close:  
6:53 am

Moon sets:  
11:26 am

Sun. sets:  
4:36 pm

Moon rises:  
6:59 pm

London 4:36 pm to 8:55 am  
 Bristol 4:45 pm to 7:08 am  
 Edinburgh 4:34 pm to 7:20 am  
 Manchester 4:36 pm to 7:59 am  
 Newcastle 6:00 pm to 7:12 am

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# THE TIMES

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BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

THURSDAY OCTOBER 31 1996

## 'Feel-better' factor materialises in time for election

By PHILIP BASSETT  
INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

CONSUMER optimism is running at its highest level of the Nineties and should be higher still by the time of the general election, new figures show today.

While the study holds back from acknowledging the return of the long-sought-after "feel-good" factor, it acknowledges that consumers are feeling "pretty good" across almost the whole country.

Conservative party strategists are closely monitoring economic indicators in advance of the general election, and especially any

signs of a genuine return of consumer confidence, which they believe will be central to the Government's electoral prospects. The report from Business Strategies (BS), the economic consultancy that has close links with the Treasury and the CBI, shows that optimism about both the economy and household finances is running at a high level and is still improving. Bridget Rosewell, a BS director, is one of the Chancellor's external economic advisers who will tomorrow give guidance before the Budget next month.

The study's consumer sentiment index, drawn from a range of spending and other

factors, now stands at 20 — the highest figure this decade, though the rate of improvement in consumers' own household finances is slowing down.

Claiming that "consumers are feeling pretty good almost everywhere", David Fell, a BS director, said: "This survey's results are a good indicator that consumer confidence will be in pretty good shape by April-May" in time for the general election. But when asked whether the return of the "feel-good" factor would automatically be of electoral benefit to the Government, he replied: "I don't believe that a 'feel-good' factor on its own will be enough to ensure

electoral victory." Insisting that consumers need both to feel good for some time, and that any such feeling takes further time to translate into real spending, he said: "It's important in determining what happens in an election. Consumers will be feeling very optimistic, and consumer spending will be strong by the time of the election."

BS analysts see the Budget as vital to that, insisting that if interest rates remain broadly unchanged and the impact of the Budget is neutral, consumer spending will continue to rise and will be in an even better position by the likely time of the election. The BS study says that spending on so-

called big ticket items such as holidays and restaurant meals will improve more markedly than spending on day-to-day items.

The forecast comes after the Government published yesterday a new study setting out ways of improving Britain's hotel, tourism and restaurant sector, with Virginia Bottomley, the Heritage Secretary, maintaining that tourism will be vital for the creation of both wealth and new jobs.

BS says that consumers are now less fearful about unemployment, and believe that low inflation is here to stay.

Fawley Image, page 29

## BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET	
FTSE 100	2932.9 (-29.6)
Yield	3.94%
FTSE All share	1932.02 (-11.48)
Nikkei	20681.67 (-276.41)
New York	
Dow Jones	6017.08 (+10.05)
S&P Composite	702.18 (+0.68)

US RATE	
Federal Funds	5 1/8% (5 1/8%)
Long Bond	100 1/8% (100 1/8%)
Yield	6.89% (6.89%)

LONDON MONEY	
3-month Interbank	6 1/4% (6 1/4%)
Libor long	100 1/8% (100 1/8%)
Future (Dec)	100 1/8% (100 1/8%)

STERLING	
New York	1.6325* (1.6395)
London	
\$	1.6325 (1.6101)
DM	2.4603 (2.4319)
FF	8.3115 (8.2223)
Sfr	2.0386 (2.0214)
Yen	186.89 (182.71)
\$ Index	90.2 (89.1)

DOLLAR	
London	
DM	1.5095* (1.5105)
FF	5.0965* (5.1120)
Sfr	1.2525* (1.2561)
Yen	113.85* (114.25)
\$ Index	87.0 (87.3)

NORTH SEA OIL	
Brent 15-day (Jan)	\$23.10 (\$23.35)

GOLD	
London close	\$380.15 (\$381.70)

\* denotes midday trading price

## SIB and Bank of England warn lenders

By ROBERT MILLER

THE Bank of England yesterday warned banks and investment firms against making rash lending decisions and overpaying their star performers.

The Bank, together with the Securities and Investments Board, the senior City regulator, said that the banking cycle has reached "a critical point" for key strategic decisions about credit risk and its pricing.

In a clear reference to events at Deutsche Morgan Grenfell and Jardine Fleming, the watchdogs said "recent irregularities in two fund management firms have underlined the importance of effective management controls and a culture of compliance."

The concerns of the Bank and the SIB are outlined in a new joint venture, *The Financial Stability Review*, published yesterday.

In an article on the issues facing the financial sector, the City authorities took the unusual step of questioning the sustainability of current high profit levels.

They said: "The half-yearly results of the major clearing banks remain one of the main indicators of the performance of the UK financial sector. The most recent figures suggest that the banks are in good shape. They are strongly capitalised and, on that basis, well placed to expand their lending."

"But it is just at this point in the cycle that an over-expansion of lending can create problems for the future."

In a radical departure from its previously more behind-the-scenes approach to regulation, the Bank says: "With a combination of optimism about the economic future and competitive pressure to maintain market share, rigorous credit assessment often takes second place. This leads to imprudent loans being booked

during the up-turn, so that subsequent problems are more severe than they need be."

Nor is the warning over what one senior Bank insider described as "often just plain stupid lending" decisions confined to big corporate loans.

The review reiterates warnings about over-zealous competition in the domestic home loans market through schemes such as cash-backs and discounts and the desire of building societies, converting to bank status to maintain market share at all costs. Kevin Ryan from the Bank's supervision and surveillance department, says: "It would be of more direct supervisory pressure or a desire to maintain market share led to pressures on converting societies to reduce lending standards."

In a separate speech in London yesterday, echoing the watchdogs' general concerns

over City behaviour, Sir Andrew Large, chairman of the SIB, criticised City bonuses, some of which top £1 million. He said: "In today's competitive markets the rewards for successful individuals are very colossal. We all know that the best staff can make millions of pounds for their employer, that some may be difficult to manage and not look kindly on any action by a line manager which could suggest a lack of trust in their abilities, let alone their integrity."

Sir Andrew added: "Issues do arise about the balance between paying stars competitively, in order to retain the best, on the one hand, and on the other, the risk of incentivising such people to behaviour which is harmful and can lead to serious damage long-term, to the firm as a whole."

Pennington, page 27  
City diary, page 29

Kenneth Clarke shows the colour of his money in the Radio 4 studios yesterday. The Chancellor and the Governor of the Bank of England later agreed a rise in base rates of one-quarter of a percentage point to 6 per cent

## Sterling rises, shares fall

By ALASDAIR MURRAY

STERLING rose to a two-and-a-half year high yesterday after the unexpected decision by Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, to raise rates by a quarter point to 6 per cent.

The pound's trade-weighted index closed up 1.1 at 90.2 after rising more than 2 cents against the dollar to \$1.6326 and from DM2.4315 to DM2.4607. But the FT-SE 100 fell back sharply on the news, closing down 29.6 points at 2,903.9.

Analysts broadly welcomed the Chancellor's move, arguing it could prevent more damaging rises in future. Tim Fox, international economist at Standard Chartered, said:

"By moving quickly now it limits the damage we could expect if he waited." The consensus in the City is that the recent rise in sterling enables the Chancellor to avoid a further rate rise before the general election although some analysts believe it will prove insufficient to curb the consumer boom.

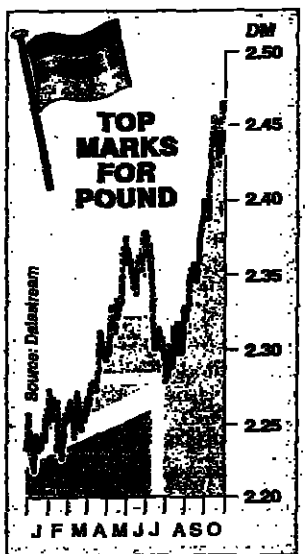
But Jonathan Loyne, UK economist at HSBC markets, gave a warning that further rate rises and a consequent further increase in the value of the pound could seriously damage industry.

That view was echoed by business and union leaders, who gave a lukewarm reception to the rate increase. The

CBI and the British Chambers of Commerce said that the move was surprising, adding that investment plans and export competitiveness could suffer.

Brian Prime, chairman of the national policy unit of the Federation of Small Businesses, said: "This could be the first step on the road to a series of increases which would adversely affect Britain's small firms' sectors."

Money-market analysts, however, predict that the pound's recent rise could continue.

Rate rise, page 1  
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## P&O bears brunt of cartel's EU fine

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN BRUSSELS

P&O and four other cross-Channel ferry operators were fined a total of more than £500,000 by the European Commission yesterday for operating a price-fixing accord.

The Commission levied the largest fine of £320,000 on P&O, as the instigator of a cartel that it found had colluded in November 1992 to soften the impact of the pound's devaluation by imposing a surcharge on freight.

The arrangement, which operated for only two months, was deemed to breach article 85 of the Treaty of Rome, which covers the single market. Since Sealink, which was held to be a co-instigator, was ordered to pay £80,000. The three other companies, Sea France, Brittany Ferries and North Sea Ferries only played a minor role and were fined £38,000, £48,000 and £20,000 respectively.

Karel Van Miert, the Competition Commissioner, said: "The simultaneous application of the surcharges was only partly successful because of

the reluctance of the clients to the measure and was of short duration. That is why the Commission decided to impose moderate penalties on the ferry companies, while establishing higher fines for P&O and Sealink as they initiated and organised the concentration by taking the contacts and developing the calculation scheme for the tariff increase."

Separately, P&O reported better news on its short-sea Channel crossings, with 2.67 million passengers travelling on the Dover to Calais route, the one most severely hit by the opening of the Channel Tunnel, in the three months to September, 6.8 per cent down on the same period last year. This compared with a 12.1 per cent fall between the three months to June and the equivalent period in 1995.

The number of tourist vehicles carried fell 9.5 per cent in the third quarter (11.2 per cent dip in the second quarter). The drop in freight traffic eased to 3.6 per cent (6.9 per cent).

## Sainsbury brings forward reshuffle

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

J SAINSBURY yesterday reported a sharp drop in interim profits and, in apparent acknowledgement of the depth of its problems, said that it would bring forward a reshuffle of top management.

Dino Adriano, head of Homebase, will replace Tom Vyner as head of supermarkets in March rather than at the end of next year. Mr Vyner will remain deputy chairman, but will be in charge of international buying.

David Sainsbury, chairman, said that the fast recruitment of a new head of Homebase would allow Mr Adriano to switch to supermarkets earlier than planned. He denied that institutional investors had put the company under any pressure to make management changes.

In the six months ended September 21, Sainsbury's pre-tax profit was £387 million, compared with £451 million a year ago. Earlier this year the company disclosed its first fall in annual profits in its 22 years as a public

company. Analysts yesterday reduced forecasts for the current year. NatWest Markets went from £725 million to £708 million while others dipped as low as £700 million. Sainsbury's is expected to earn less this year than Tesco, its arch rival.

The operating margin shrank to 6.4 per cent, from 7.8 per cent a year ago, partly because of the cost of launching the Reward loyalty card and the petrol price war.

Like-for-like stores sales growth, excluding petrol growth, was 2.7 per cent in the first half and is now near 3 per cent, in line with inflation but well below the sector average.

The Reward card is now being used by seven million customers. The proportion — 86 per cent — is the same as that of Tesco shoppers who have a Clubcard. The interim dividend is 3.5p (3.4p), payable on January 15.

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Diary, page 28

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# Gas regulation in spotlight at start of utilities inquiry

By Christine Buckley, Industrial Correspondent

THE first round of a parliamentary inquiry into energy regulation, which could set a framework on which Labour's utility tax will be calculated, began yesterday with gas thrust into the spotlight.

By early next year, the all-party Trade and Industry Select Committee will draft a report that will assess the extent to which electricity and gas companies have been under-regulated or over-regulated.

Such conclusions — the first from a public body — could provide a benchmark for a Labour government to draw up windfall taxes to serve on

the utilities. Although City analysts have pinned various figures on the amount of windfall tax that utilities could sustain while still offering reasonable investment potential, the committee's report would offer independent analysis.

Over the next few weeks the committee will hear evidence from companies on how they have been regulated and question regulators on their performance.

British Gas yesterday called for an overhaul of regulation. With the company and Ofgas currently stuck at the Monopolies and Mergers Commis-

sion over pricing controls for TransCo, Richard Giordano, chairman, told MPs: "Reform that tempers regulatory discretion and limits unpredictable intervention would benefit all stakeholders in regulated industries."

British Gas said that key weaknesses of the regulatory system were the amount of personal power of a regulator and the lack of accountability and transparency.

The National Consumers Council yesterday urged a halt to the second phase of the introduction of competition in domestic gas, only a day after the regulator announced two dates to enable one-and-a-half million more customers to shop around for gas.

The council said that the new trials to begin next year in the South East should not go ahead until problems in the first area — the South West — had been resolved.

Robin Simpson, acting director, said Ofgas's consultation over further opening the market glossed over serious problems faced by customers, played down marketing tactics, and proposed inadequate safeguards to protect users.

## Top slot for Andersen

THE latest figures from Arthur Andersen show that it has, by a whisker, become the UK's biggest accountancy and professional services firm (Robert Bruce writes).

Net revenues from the consulting, accounting and business and law arms were £620.2 million, up 15 per cent on the year. This is marginally ahead of the

£619 million announced last month by the previous biggest firm, Coopers & Lybrand.

Global figures also released show that Andersen Worldwide has consolidated its place as the biggest firm in the world with a 17 per cent increase in fees taking global revenue to \$9.5 billion.



Syed Ziauddin Ali Akbar leaving jail yesterday

## Ex-BCCI treasurer walks free from jail

By Richard Ford, Home Correspondent

THE architect of the biggest banking fraud in British criminal history walked free from Brixton prison yesterday after the collapse of moves to extradite him on blackmail charges.

Syed Ziauddin Ali Akbar, former Treasurer of the Bank of Credit and Commercial International, was freed when US authorities decided not to appeal against a High Court order for his release.

The bank was shut in July 1991 by worldwide regulatory action after investigators discovered a fraud of up to \$20 billion.

Mr Akbar, aged 52, from Golders Green, north London, said as he left jail: "I am very much glad, very much."

He declined to say whether he would leave the UK. "For the time being, I don't know what I'm doing. At least for a couple of weeks, I will be spending time with my family, then I will decide what to do."

Mr Akbar, who has served three years of a six-year sentence for false accounting, criticised the Home Office over its handling of his extradition case.

He was arrested immediately he was released after serving the sentence for false accounting and spent 14 months in jail facing extradition to the US.

## UK 'against linkage of jobs and trade'

## UK 'against linkage of jobs and trade'

BRITAIN will "vigorously resist" attempts by the US to link trade liberalisation to minimum world employment standards, Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, said yesterday. The UK strongly urged countries not to try to use the forthcoming ministerial meeting of the World Trade Organisation in Singapore to push their claim. The December meeting will be the first since the WTO was formed last year to replace the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade organisation (GATT) after the successful completion of the Uruguay trade round.

Speaking to the Royal Institute of International Affairs at Chatham House, Mr Lang said: "Britain will vigorously resist this linkage, which will only serve to slow down trade liberalisation and could even make social problems in the countries concerned even worse." Britain wanted to see progress on trade standards, public procurement, tariffs, professional services and information technology.

## Defeat for Berlusconi

DOCUMENTS seized by the Serious Fraud Office from a company associated with the business empire of Silvio Berlusconi, the former Italian prime minister accused of involvement in a £51 million fraud, can be returned to Italy, the House of Lords ruled yesterday. The SFO seized the papers at the request of Italian authorities after executing a warrant under its Section 2 powers on the London offices of CMM Corporate Services, Peters & Peters, the law firm acting for the Italian media magnate, had challenged the seizure.

## Emap acquires The Box

EMAP is paying \$12.5 million for The Box, a cable TV channel that is an interactive station which plays popular music videos requested by its audience. The channel, founded four years ago, is available to more than 1.3 million homes in the United Kingdom via cable networks and is expected to break even next year with a turnover of more than £2 million. This is the first television acquisition by Emap, which was part of a consortium that unsuccessfully bid for the ITV franchise for the Anglia region.

## Pilat targets AIM

PILAT, which makes software used to process the results of school inspections, is joining the growing contingent of Israeli companies on the Alternative Investment Market. The company, which has been operating in the UK for 20 years, hopes to raise £3.5 million from the placing. While the UK makes up 65 per cent of its sales, it also runs subsidiaries in Hong Kong and Malaysia. The placing is sponsored by Raphael Zorn Hensely.

## Safeway Inc wants Vons

AMERICA'S Safeway Inc has offered to buy the rest of Vons Cos Inc, another supermarket operator, in a deal that values Vons at \$3.25 billion and will create the country's second-biggest grocery store chain. Safeway Inc, which is not related to the UK's Safeway, already owns 34.5 per cent of Vons. Safeway Inc is offering to exchange 1.34 Safeway shares for each Vons share not owned by Safeway, valuing Vons at more than \$58 a share.

## Accountancy change

FINANCIAL reporting rules for cashflow statements have been revised in a bid to make them simpler. The Accounting Standards Board (ASB) has released a revised version of its FRS1 standard, which it said will allay companies' worries. Treasury activities will now be shown in a new "management of liquid resources" section of the statement, which Sir David Tweedie, ASB chairman, said would "be the first genuine cashflow statement in the world". Accountancy, page 32.

## Limelight sets price

LIMELIGHT, manufacturer and retailer of fitted kitchens, bathrooms, bedrooms and conservatories, has confirmed its offer price range at 175p to 190p, valuing the company at between £175 million and £190 million. The intermediaries offer closes on November 13 and dealings start on November 15. Pro forma earnings per share of 10.6p for the year to December 31 give a price/earnings multiple of 16.5 to 17.9 times. The notional net dividend per ordinary share is 4.7p.

## Xenova puts out pathfinder prospectus

Xenova Group, the UK-based biopharmaceutical company that is developing anti-cancer and heart disease drugs, published its pathfinder prospectus yesterday as it seeks to raise £25 million from a placing and full listing on the London Stock Exchange. The Nasdaq-quoted company, which develops drugs from natural micro-organisms, said its first product could be ready for market by 2000. The XRS000 anti-cancer drug is expected to enter clinical trials early next year. Terms of the placing, sponsored by Greig Middleton, and final listing details will be published in the second half of next month.

## TOURIST RATES

	Bank	Rate
Australia \$	2.13	1.97
Austria Sch	18.00	16.39
Belgium F	36.00	48.72
Canada \$	2.270	2.110
Cyprus Cyp	0.774	0.719
Denmark Kr	9.91	9.11
Finland Mk	7.86	7.21
France F	6.52	6.07
Germany Dm	3.96	3.73
Greece Dr	16.38	15.08
Hong Kong \$	115	95
Iceland	1.04	0.96
Ireland P	7.86	7.21
Italy Lira	2.061	2.005
Japan Yen	197.90	181.50
Malta	2.617	2.485
Netherlands Gld	2.877	2.847
New Zealand \$	2.45	2.21
Norway Kr	257.00	238.50
Portugal Esc	4.12	3.78
Spain Ptas	211.50	198.50
Sweden Kr	11.18	10.39
Switzerland F	2.15	1.97
Turkey Lira	157.000	149.000
USA \$	1.707	1.577

Notes: for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

## THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS (NOTIFICATION) REGULATIONS 1996

## (AS AMENDED BY THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS (NOTIFICATION) (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS 1996)

The United Kingdom is required to make declarations, in relation to certain chemicals and chemical production facilities, to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

To enable the United Kingdom to meet fully its obligations to submit accurate information to the OPCW, the Secretary of State has made the above Regulations. These require that those persons, companies and organisations specified in the Regulations provide the Secretary of State, on or before 15 January each year with full details of their name, their address (or in the case of a company the address of its principal or registered office) and the address of each plant site it operates.

The above notification details must be in writing and be sent or delivered to:

Chemical Weapons Authority  
Department of Trade & Industry  
King's Gate House,  
66-74 Victoria Street, London SW1E 6SW

For further information please contact the Chemical Weapons Authority on 0171 215 8222.

# B.A.T INDUSTRIES

## £2 billion profit at nine months

Nine months unaudited results  
to 30 September 1996

PRE-TAX PROFIT	£2,039m	+9%
EARNINGS PER SHARE	39.9p	+9%

- Pre-tax profit up 9% against last year's record nine months, with good progress from both the Group's businesses.
- Financial services profit up 3% at £846 million; sustained improvement in life business and continuing growth at Farmers.
- Tobacco profit up 7% to £1,265 million; volumes up 3% with strong sales growth in the Asia Pacific and Amesca regions.
- "The good progress in both the Group's businesses is being maintained but headlines have, once again, been dominated by US tobacco litigation."

After a full review of millions of pages of technical work and scientific research conducted by or for British-American Tobacco Company and Brown & Williamson, I would like to reassure shareholders that there has never been any concealment from the public of any conclusion establishing that smoking causes diseases. Indeed, the companies continue to support independent research without any restriction on publication."

Lord Cairns, Chairman

The full quarterly report is being posted to shareholders and copies are available from the Company Secretary, B.A.T Industries p.l.c., Windsor House, 50 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0NL.

□ Dangers of strong sterling □ Dull outlook for Sainsbury □ Bank's warning, in a rougher form

## Currencies beyond our Ken

HE DOES like his surprises, doesn't he, our Ken? Perhaps the City should have been better prepared for yesterday's interest rate rise, which might have prevented some of the unnecessary blind panic on the equity and currency markets.

Analysts, with the benefit of hindsight, which is how most of them like to operate, were able to interpret the rate rise as a typically canny political move ahead of the Budget, heading off pressure from the City and Eddie George at the Bank for a rise but leaving himself room to add a tax cut sweetener. Economically the case is less clear-cut, and that was reflected by the mixed reception Mr Clarke's move received in the City and industry.

The inflation hawks who welcomed the rise also believe that a quarter-point increase — especially when the mortgage lenders did not move too — will do little to apply the brakes on consumer spending. History is on their side. During the last upward movement in rates, in 1994-95, it took 1.5 per cent to bring the spending tide, rather than underpinning Mr Clarke's claims that a 0.25 per cent rise will do the trick.

The danger is sterling. That expectation of further rises is going to underpin the pound's recent advances. Sterling has now risen 6.5 per cent since August, equivalent to a 1.5 per cent rise in

base rates, according to the Treasury's rule of thumb. Currency speculators have been moving out of marks because of progress towards economic and monetary union. They are worried the slightly mark will be hit if too many weak economies such as Spain, Italy and Portugal are shoeboxed into EMU.

Older readers may have difficulty comprehending a flight from the mark to the pound as a safe haven currency, but that is the reality in Europe today. It leaves business organisations such as the CBI expressing concern that the strong pound, although good for raw material prices and so inflation, will damage their members' competitiveness abroad.

Trouble has always arisen when the economic cycle and the political cycle become uncoupled, making politicians do silly things in economic terms for political reasons. What has happened here is that the political cycle has become uncoupled from currency markets, which are reacting to other influences. Mr Clarke's strategy could then end up creating the worst of both

worlds — insufficient to rein back the consumer boom but too harsh for the fragile manufacturing sector. Bung in a tax cut and you are beginning to have the makings of an Eighties-style two-tier economy.

For now, yesterday's fall in stock markets, pushing the FTSE 100 firmly below the 4,000 barrier again, looks overdue, because the factors that sent the FTSE above that level are not going to be affected by a quarter point on interest rates. But do watch those currency markets. A pound stranded well above DM250 will bring its own problems.

### Spice missing from store ingredients

IT IS always sad when the best news in a company's figures is the departure of one of the senior executives. Tom Vyner, deputy chairman of J Sainsbury and head of the supermarkets business itself, is being replaced early by Dino Adriano. Hardly fresh blood, though, as the new man has spent almost all his



working life at Sainsbury. The decline in recent years of what was once the middle class's preferred delicatessen has been startling. In public perception and in actual quality, there is now little to choose between Sainsbury, Tesco, the market leader, and Sainsbury or Asda, certainly in the case of new and purpose-built stores. There is no pressing reason for the shopper to walk past one to get to another.

At Sainsbury, like-for-like sales show growth keeping pace with inflation at 3 per cent. But this does not take into account store extensions, and so, in reality, sales volumes are dropping. In six months' time the picture will be worse. The only good news in the second half will

also be good news for its rivals — better margins on petrol, for example. Worst of all, the parvenu Tesco is expected to bring in a pre-tax profit for the year of up to £760 million, topping Sainsbury for the first time. After a wholesale downgrading yesterday, the latter is seen as producing a figure nearer £700 million.

Hard to imagine even a couple of years ago that Tesco would overtake Sainsbury not only in market share, but also in market capitalisation and then, finally and humiliate, in profits? These forecasts put Tesco and Sainsbury on the same market rating, at a price earnings ratio of about 14. Part of the decline has come from the delay in introducing a Sainsbury loyalty card — once these become standard across the sector, they are nothing more than deferred price cuts all around.

David Sainsbury spoke yesterday of the advantages in the US and opportunities in banking. What he did not offer was any suggestion as to how Sainsbury is going to recover that once unassailable position, or even stop its slide. He spoke of

providing a platform for "a solidly based recovery". One must wonder whether even he now believes his own words.

### Prudence as things go in cycles

THE new instrument forged by the Bank of England and the Securities and Investments Board to put their views over to the financial markets is a subtle one. The *Financial Stability Review* is full of worthy pieces about international regulatory cooperation and sovereign risk, but the section that will most reward the reading is helpfully positioned at the front of the book.

Somewhere or something called Prudence muses in honeyed, bankerish tones about the various issues of the day. All anonymous, but one does detect the influence of Howard Davies, Deputy Governor of the Bank and a man who relaxes by turning out the odd sentence or two for the quality press. One wonders how Eddie George, with his reputation for bluntness, would have phrased it.

Strangely enough, Mr George wrote an alternative draft, which was suppressed. Even stranger, a copy arrived here yesterday.

"We have just seen the half-way results from you banks, and surprise, surprise, even you can make a mint in this market. But what if and when it all turns sour again? All those spotty 23-year-olds shovelling the cash out to all comers, they wouldn't know a bad credit risk from their elbows. "Could you get your more experienced bankers — those who were out of short trousers by Big Bang, you must have a few still around — to remind said 23-year-olds that Things Go in Cycles and you don't have to lend to anyone who walks in the door. Meanwhile, set aside a few bob for a rainy day while you can. "Will this do? I could make it longer if you want."

### One way trip?

THE dispute between Whitbread and David Lloyd has been so bitter and so public that the brewer must regard Australia as about far enough away. Whitbread's generosity in funding the £20 million man's new venture there is less easy to understand — unless the deal, like some earlier relocations to Botany Bay, includes a clause forbidding him from ever returning to these shores.

## BAT dents hopes of imminent demerger

BY MARIANNE CURPHEY

BAT INDUSTRIES, the tobacco and financial services group, yesterday dampened hopes of an imminent demerger of the two businesses. Martin Broughton, chief executive, said that a strategic review had shown such a move would not add shareholder value.

Mr Broughton said the company was not "obsessed by retaining the current structure", but if a demerger could be shown to improve cashflow, then he would consider it.

BAT's share price, which has fallen from a high of around 380p at the end of last year, slipped 16p further in afternoon trading to 427p after the company reported its pre-tax profits for the first nine months of the year. The performance of the shares has been hit by concerns over litigation in the United States against BAT and other companies.

Lord Cairns, chairman, insisted the company had never kept from the public "any conclusion establishing that smoking causes disease".

Reporting a 9 per cent rise in

pre-tax profits to £2.04 billion (1995: £1.87 billion), Mr Broughton revealed that Eagle Star, part of the company's financial services division, had made a £91 million provision for environmental claims in the United States. This brings the total provision for pollution and asbestos liability to £130 million.

David Alvey, group finance director, said the number of claims had been unexpectedly high, although most were for small amounts.

The total trading profit for financial services rose 3 per cent to £946 million.

Eagle Star's worldwide underwriting loss deteriorated to £108 million, from £38 million for the same period last year. Eagle Star's profit for the nine months was £32 million lower at £162 million.

In the general business markets remained competitive and worldwide gross premium fell 12 per cent to £1.5 billion. In the UK, personal lines premium income was 23 per cent lower, partly because of the loss of the Motability motor business. In the life business, worldwide gross premium income including unit trusts rose to £733 million.

In the tobacco division, total trading profits rose 7 per cent to £1.3 billion. Overall, cigarette volumes were up 3 per cent, with strong sales in the Asia Pacific, Africa, the Middle East, and southern and central Asia. However, the company said cigarette sales in Europe had been disappointing and sales in the US had been static.

Earnings per share rose 9 per cent to 39.9p.



Broughton: unconvinced

Times, page 28



Haynes Publishing, well-known for its car repair manuals, is moving up from the USM to a full listing. John Haynes, right, chairman and founder, and Max Pearce, the chief executive, celebrated record profits of £5.5 million last year

## Break point for David Lloyd

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY

WHITBREAD has revealed that David Lloyd is stepping down as non-executive chairman of David Lloyd Leisure, ending the often acrimonious relationship between the brewing company and the former tennis star since Whitbread paid £200 million to take over the tennis and fitness chain last year (see Pennington, this page).

Mr Lloyd, who made a personal profit of £20 million from the Whitbread sale, yesterday said he had decided to leave the

company because he wanted to spend more time pursuing other business interests. He is close to starting two new David Lloyd clubs in Australia and is also keen on opening up in China. Whitbread has said that it is considering investing in the Australian sites.

Mr Lloyd remained on the board of David Lloyd Leisure as executive chairman after the takeover last year. But he is understood to have been unhappy with the style of management that Whitbread introduced to the organisation and felt he was being increasingly sidelined by the

Whitbread executive team. In July it was agreed that Mr Lloyd would step down from an executive position but would continue in a consultative role as non-executive chairman of the company.

It is understood that Mr Lloyd, who was on a three-year rolling contract worth £200,000 a year, will not be paid compensation. Mr Lloyd is believed to be keen to increase his involvement with Britain's Davies Cup tennis team and recently became a non-executive director of Clubhaus, the golf club operator, investing £100,000 in the company.

## Changes at Deutsche Bank to mend image

BY ROBERT MILLER

DEUTSCHE BANK, Germany's largest bank and the owner of Morgan Grenfell, has strengthened its main board with the appointment of a top European banker to head its market risks and treasury division.

Josef Ackermann, 48, formerly president of the executive board of Credit Suisse, has joined the Deutsche board of managing directors. Hilmar Kopper, 61, will leave the main group board next May to join its supervisory board, together with Ulrich Cartellieri, 59. Ellen Schneider-Lenne, 54, is leaving the group because of ill-health.

The recent problems at Deutsche Morgan Grenfell, the bank's investment arm, over alleged irregularities with three of its European unit trusts, has clouded the fact that the parent company has suffered its fair share of embarrassment. The bank has suffered heavy losses and adverse publicity over Metallgesellschaft, the metals group, and Jurgen Schneider, the property tycoon.

The main board changes yesterday, with Mr Kopper moving upstairs and the recruitment of the highly respected Dr Ackermann, are clear signals to shareholders, the market and analysts that Deutsche intends to restore its international standing.

## LVMH takeover of luxury goods group contested

BY NOEL FUNG

LVMH, the French luxury goods company, has made a bold move into retailing by spending Fr12.6 billion for a controlling stake in DFS Group, an American business known for selling expensive perfumes and jewellery in airports and hotel lobbies.

However, the deal is being opposed by Robert Miller, who founded DFS along with Charles Feeney in 1961. Mr Miller, a billionaire, still has a 38.75 per cent stake in DFS.

According to *The New York Times*, Mr Miller has filed a petition in the New York County Supreme Court for a temporary restraining order to block the sale. He claims it violated an agreement the partners signed in 1991.

DFS, a private company, employs 9,500 staff worldwide and has annual sales of more than \$3 billion. It prides itself on 20 years of retail experience

in Asia, trading from 180 boutiques, many around the Pacific Rim. About 10 per cent of its sales comes from LVMH products.

Mr Feeney and Alan Parker, DFS's tax lawyer, are believed to be among the DFS shareholders who have agreed to sell a 58.75 per cent stake in the company to LVMH.

Myron Ullman, chairman and chief executive officer of DFS, said: "After 35 years, it is understandable that some of DFS's owners have different priorities and interests that have prompted them to explore new opportunities."

LVMH said that it intended to retain DFS's autonomous status and management team. The acquisition would "intensify LVMH's presence in the Asia-Pacific region and emerging markets, a key area for future growth", the group added.

## NatWest Interest Rates

Interest rates applicable to Business Overdraft Agreements and Business Loan Agreements are increased by 1/4% per annum with effect from 31 October 1996.

"This notice does not apply to agreements which specify the rate as fixed or linked to Base Rate."

**NatWest**

National Westminster Bank Plc, 41 Lombury, London EC2P 2BP

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## STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

# Shares stay below 4,000 as rate rise takes its toll

THE first rate rise in two years caught the Square Mile on the hop and left both government securities and share prices nursing some hefty falls.

The quarter-point increase to 6 per cent was announced after the monthly economic meeting between Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, and Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England.

The news succeeded in scuppering an early attempt by the FT-SE 100 index to recover the high ground back after the 4,000 level which it relinquished on Tuesday. The index saw an early Wall Street inspired 17-point fall replaced with a fall of 35 points. But another positive start by the Dow Jones enabled the FT-SE 100 to close just off the bottom last night, finishing 29.6 down at 3,963.9.

The speed with which market-makers reacted to news of the cut prevented institutional investors unloading stock, so selling pressure proved minimal. By the close 72.1 million shares had been traded.

Richard Jeffrey, economist at Charterhouse, saw it as a positive move to counter inflationary pressures already building up in the economy. "Gilt will set the path equities are likely to follow. The gilt market certainly remains anxious about the outlook for inflation," he said.

Double-figure falls were commonplace among blue chips. Zeneca fell 15.2p to 16.96, Glaxo 14.2p to 956p, Reed International 12.2p to 793p. Consumer related issues also took a hit with Boots off 12p at 616.5p, Next 11.2p at 563p, EMI 10p at 12.16, Reckitt & Coleman 10p at 706.8p and Unilever 10p at 412.8p.

Grand Metropolitan was a dark market, losing 3.2p at 466.4p on claims it is ready to pay £1 billion-plus for the Dutch group Koninklijke Bolewessanen.

The stores sector was marked lower amid fears that dealer money could damage the revival in consumer confidence. Marks & Spencer fell 5p to 514p, Dixons 3.2p to 551.2p, Fine Art Developments 7p to 466.4p, and Thorn 6.2p to 351.2p.

The speculators appear to be getting their wires crossed at Vodafone, where the price touched 245p before settling just 2.1p better at 236p.



An upbeat David Sainsbury saw the chain's shares rise 8.1p

Early talk in the Square Mile suggested that American Telephone & Telegraph, the US telecoms group, wanted to bid for the company. Much of the activity in the shares appears to have been conducted on the traded options market where one investor gave heavily for the call. At these levels Vodafone carries a price tag of £7.1 billion, but has seen its

Like-for-like sales kept pace with inflation in the first six months as pre-tax profits tumbled from £456 million to £393 million. The group was upbeat about current trading and David Sainsbury, chairman, is looking forward to a busy run-up to Christmas with its loyalty and credit cards used by seven million customers. Margins in the supermarkets

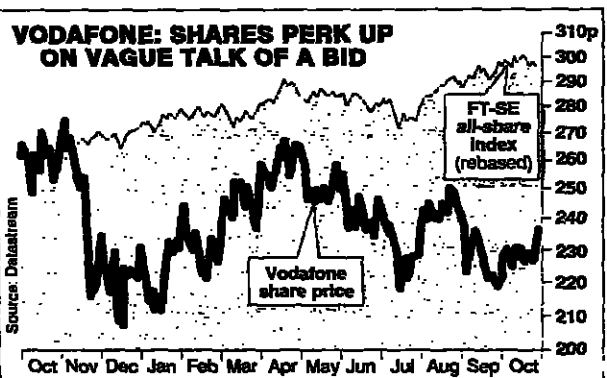
Dieter Bock's sale of his 18 per cent Lonrho stake to Anglo American does not appear to have gone down well with City speculators. It seems they would have preferred a much tidier solution, such as a full bid. Lonrho slipped 13p to 150.1p, against the 180p a share Bock is expected to sell his stake for.

share price slip amid signs that the growth in the mobile telephone market was starting to slow. Brokers do not rule out the possibility of a joint venture, at some stage, between Vodafone and AT&T.

The City gave a cautious welcome to half-year figures from J Sainsbury as it threw down the gauntlet in an attempt to win back its role as Britain's biggest food retailer.

were stable and improving in petrol retailing. Sainsbury rose 8.1p to 363.2p. Elsewhere, Tesco rose 2.1p to 326p, and William Morrison Supermarkets 3.2p to 160.9p.

BAT Industries fell 9p to 427p and now stands 5p above the low for the year as this quarter's figures, continuing to highlight the continuing problems of litigation in the US over cancer-related dis-



Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct

Source: Datastream

FT-SE all-share index (rebased)

Vodafone share price

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THE TIMES



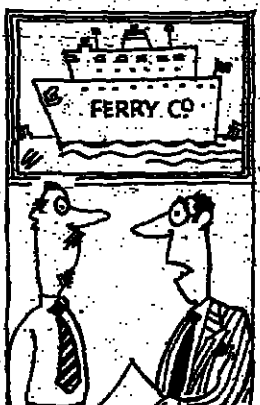
Robinson ad lib takes AIM

GEOFFREY ROBINSON was in fine fettle on Tuesday night, entertaining guests at the inaugural awards dinner of the Alternative Investment Market.

Fired by his confidant, the Labour MP for Coventry North West, and founder of TransTec, the engineering group, took to the stage like a man who had made the most of his meal. Casting aside his prepared notes, on public sector borrowing and tax, Robinson ad libbed, stumbling across the stage at the same time. Anyone who had looked forward to a rousing speech on Labour and the City might well have been a little disappointed. Robinson made his exit eventually, and headed for the House of Commons to vote on the Queen's speech.

Bank's Prudence

EVER wanted to know who holds sway at the Bank of England? Then dip into *Financial Stability*, the first edition of the Bank's new magazine, written in association with the Securities and Investments Board. The guts of the publication, that appear opposite a piece by, and photograph of, Howard Davies, is cryptically signed "Prudence". The somewhat prim sounding scribbler takes the name from the Deputy Governor's wife — Pru Keely, a freelance producer for Channel 4 news and mother of their two young sons.



"Now we shall all have to increase our fares to pay our fines"

Vynier casts off

SO, TOM VYNIER is to move aside as head of the J Sainsbury supermarket business in March, making way for Dino Adriano. At the age of 61, he will fully retire from the business at the end of 1997. Vynier explains that he stayed on at the request of David Sainsbury, chairman and chief executive, having originally planned to retire at 58. Once he is finally released from his duties at Sainsbury's, his intention is to head for Mallorca, where a boat has been moored for the past 18 months, patiently awaiting his arrival.

Musical note

ANALYSTS waited into BAT's meeting yesterday to the sound of Verdi's *La Traviata* (Act 2, Scene 2). The "Jolly" piece was chosen by Michael Priddy, opera buff and director of group affairs at the tobacco company, who tells me that he was inspired by a recent production. Priddy also lets slip that BAT sponsored a production of the opera at Glyndebourne in 1987. At BAT's results day, which normally falls on national Non-Smoking Day, a piece from *Carmen* is usually selected.

What cut?

TOO quick for its own good, the British Chamber of Commerce whipped off a press release yesterday — "Chambers Express Surprise at Rate Cut". According to the poor stooge left to take the flak, "it does contain a slight mistake and, yes, we are very embarrassed".

MORAG PRESTON

Both contenders have delivered their opening Budget punches. In the blue corner, the real Chancellor has prepared financial markets for tax cuts. By allowing steady Eddie his symbolic quarter-point base rate rise, Canny Ken told the world he was not going to put anti-inflation disciplines on hold just because of an election — whatever is actually the case.

By winding monetary policy one notch tighter, the Chancellor also seemed to leave room for a later vote-winning fiscal policy. That may be more apparent than real. Before the rate rise, the National Institute somewhat cynically reckoned that he should increase taxes by about £3 billion a year but would probably cut them by £4 billion.

Given the usual raid on the contingency reserve and some extra asset sales, that might be possible. But Mr Clarke could not go further in his Budget judgment. He could not honourably forecast a Budget deficit that barely scraped through the Maastricht test. Regardless of the UK's attitude to a European currency, extra government borrowing should be nowhere near 3 per cent of national income after six straight years of output growth.

That Budget judgment is, thankfully, not the beginning and end of Budget-making. There is endless scope for a creative Chancellor to arrange the tax burden better. That means he can also offer far more popular measures than the net change in taxes might suggest. The Treasury has already stopped up special dividend and share buyback loopholes that it modestly reckons to be worth £400 million a year. Tax

relief on profit-related pay, now thought to be running at £15 billion a year, should be in its sights. PRP was a good idea at the time, but was constructed to encourage its use as a loophole to save tax on existing pay rather than merely making pay rises conditional on company performance. Tax advisers duly obliged. The scheme is now ripe to be wound up as gently as possible.

From the red corner, challenger Gordon Brown has tirelessly preempted the Chancellor by putting forward a use for £450 million of this extra tax revenue that is as fiscally sensible as it is politically embarrassing. He has pledged to cut VAT on domestic fuel back from 8 per cent, where it was stranded by a government defeat in the Commons, to 5 per cent, which is the least that the European Union's VAT harmonisation rules would now permit.

The genuine benefit of such a move is that it would actually help to cut government spending and start a virtuous fiscal circle of lower taxes and spending. Levying VAT on domestic fuel was, on that test, one of the worst tax decisions in living memory. For every £3 it raised, the Government has had to spend almost £1 extra to compensate for the ensuing price rises. This was a peculiar

# Taxing but painless ways to cut the social security bill



GRAHAM SEARJEANT

case, because the tax fell most heavily on the spending of poorer pensioners. So Tory backbenchers rightly insisted that they should be given peculiar compensation above the rise in the retail price index.

More generally, taxes that raise the price of goods in the RPI basket pump up public spending because most social security benefits are linked to the RPI and are automatically uprated in line with prices to maintain minimum living standards. On average, to raise £5 in extra tax on everyday goods, the government has to spend £1 or more in extra benefits. Social security

accounts for about a third of all government spending, and it is the burgeoning, least controlled third. By boosting welfare spending, switches from direct to indirect taxes since 1979 have increased the total tax burden by up to 2 per cent of national income. That is a lot of tax. If the Chancellor could give it all back next month, we would put flags out all over Britain. But many would soon furl them again if he raised direct taxes heavily in the process, even though total taxes would be much lower. Reform must be more subtle.

Income taxes, if badly structured, can have as malign an effect on public spending as extra taxes on household spending. They not only can, they do. The tax threshold is so low that millions of poor people are, in effect, being paid benefits to make good their income tax deductions. Low-income families with a single earner are most affected because the social security system rightly allows for family circumstance. The income tax system, wrongly, does not.

Nonsensical tax policies have been ratcheting public spending ever higher for decades. The feedback between taxes and spending has been ignored because classical textbooks on public finance fail to mention

it. Since it is not obligatory to have a social security backstop (unless you live in a democracy), the theory does not need to accommodate it. Even the Institute for Fiscal Studies, usually pragmatic as well as objective, reckons that the impact of taxes on poor people is more efficiently dealt with through the welfare system.

Ratcheting up the tax burden through needless extra spending is not efficient. It damages the economy. Redesigning the tax system to reverse this trend should be the top fiscal priority when most agree that the tax burden is too high for the economy's comfort. The trouble is that popular taxes or taxes that do not distort markets are equally rare. Loophole-filling aside, it is not politically easy to shift the tax burden advantageously. But it is possible.

The Chancellor has made some well-judged moves in this direction. Taxes on landfill or air travel are either avoidable or have little impact on the RPI. Stamp duties, another great tax on these tests, could usefully be extended to credit card transactions and much else. The ceiling for employees' National Insurance contributions could be raised. Proceeds of such imposts should be used to stop those requiring benefits from paying income tax and to make sure Budgets cut the RPI, not raise it.

The price is worth it. If every tax and every tax proposal were vetted for its impact on public spending, you could actually believe a politician who promised to cut the tax burden without any impact on the public services, the welfare net and the income transfers we pay our taxes to finance.

# Computer wars get personal with plans to shut Gates out

Richard Thomson looks at the fierce challenge to Microsoft from the new Network Computer

Even by the standards of the ever-turbulent computer industry, this week is seeing something unusual. The end-less skirmishing between rival companies is turning uglier and more urgent. It's war, and a spate of announcements over the past few days show how the battle lines have been drawn.

At stake is the future shape of the industry: what kind of computer you have at home and in the office next year, what tasks it will be able to do and, crucially, what it will cost. On the outcome may hang the futures of multi-billion dollar, world-class companies such as Microsoft, Intel and IBM — not to mention the personal fortunes of many of the computer industry's most powerful moguls.

On one side stand Microsoft and Intel, the two colossi that together almost invented the personal computer. On the other is a formidable array of rivals, including IBM, Apple Computer, Oracle Corp (the second largest software group after Microsoft) and Sun Microsystems, that want to overthrow the PC and replace it with a simpler and far cheaper machine with the generic name of Network Computer (NC).

The NC is a stripped-down PC with no hard drive and does not use Microsoft software. It connects easily to the Internet or an internal corporate network and handles the most popular functions, such as word processing and financial spreadsheets. It is much simpler to use because it does not answer your phone, play 3D computer games or take dictation like ordinary PCs and does not go wrong so often. It also costs about \$500, about a quarter of the price of an average PC.

On Tuesday, Sun Microsystems, led by Scott McNeally, its chief executive, announced its version of the NC, the Java Station. On the same day, IBM began taking orders for its NC, and Oracle is also announcing a similar product. On Monday, Oracle and Netscape, the upstart software company that dominates Internet programs, announced an alliance in which they will pool resources to provide software for NCs. All of these companies have already agreed on common standards for their machines.

Meanwhile, Microsoft and Intel are hitting back, with an announcement made on Monday of plans for a Simply Interactive PC (SIPC), which is the old-style of personal computer that has, in theory, been made as easy to use as your stereo system. By streamlining the old PC, Microsoft and Intel are hoping to preserve its popularity against the new-



Bill Gates, the software giant, faces new computers that sidestep his Microsoft programs

style network computers. Heavyweight manufacturers such as Compaq and Hewlett Packard have pitched their tents in the Microsoft camp.

And this time, the battle is personal. Larry Ellison, the aggressive, multi-billionaire founder of Oracle, has staked publicly that he is out to get Bill Gates, multi-billionaire founder of Microsoft. "Maybe

I should fire a few Maverick missiles into his living room," said Mr Ellison, who is currently negotiating to buy a redundant MiG fighter plane from the Russians as his latest executive toy. Mr Ellison aims to break Mr Gates's stranglehold on the PC market by destroying the PC market itself.

Mr Ellison is driven by a vision. Only 30 per cent of US

households and 10 per cent of European and Japanese families own a PC, compared with 90 per cent ownership of telephones and televisions. He believes that computers should have 90 per cent penetration, but that this can be achieved only if computers become easier to use, and far cheaper.

Most people, he insists, use only a fraction of the facilities

included in their all-singing, all-dancing PCs. Modern desktops, in spite of their massive computing power, are often slower than they were a few years ago because of the huge, expensive and unnecessary volume of software packaged inside them.

NCs will also be a boon to most businesses, Mr Ellison says. Many businesses are growing disillusioned with the high cost of maintaining PCs. A \$2,000 PC, for instance, can cost a corporation anywhere from \$6,000 to \$12,000 a year to run. By contrast, NCs, which get their software from the Internet or a company's internal "intranet" run from a mainframe, or server, cost a fraction of that amount to maintain. A number of large US companies have recently announced that they are junking their over-expensive PCs and switching to a network of NCs.

If NCs replace PCs, as Mr Ellison thinks that they will, the industry giants' lifeblood may be abruptly cut off. On the hardware side, Intel makes 90 per cent of its microprocessors from PCs. Its profitability depends on producing ever-faster chips, which it does with brilliant efficiency, and selling them on high margins.

A 75 MegaHertz chip sells for about \$60, and a 200Mhz chip (at the top end for speed) sells for \$500, but their production costs are almost the same. NCs, however, need only the slower, less expensive chips — one reason they are cheaper to buy. If they start replacing PCs, Intel will have to sell more lower-margin chips, which would have a devastating effect on its profits.

For Microsoft, the implications are just as dire. Its dominance rests on its PC software, which runs on 90 per cent of all PCs sold. However, NCs do not contain any software themselves since they simply download it as they need it from whatever network to which they are connected. If they replaced PCs, sales of Windows 95 and most of Microsoft's other programs would crash.

Moreover, Microsoft does not control the standard software of the Internet in the way that it controls PC software. Instead, Sun's new computer language, Java, is being touted by many companies as the Internet standard and the one that most NCs will use.

William Milton, computer industry analyst with Brown Brothers Harriman, said: "We're on the cusp of a major change in computers. We may be at the peak of the PC's dominance right now, before a decline."

However, the contest is only just beginning. The personal computer market this year has been soft, with sales growth slumping to about 17 per cent, from more than 25 per cent last year. The Christmas sales period, traditionally the strongest time for retail computer sales, may be crucial to the way that the industry develops next. If sales do not pick up, Mr Ellison and his troops will claim that the PC has fallen out of favour and that the public is ready for something new.

His claim that more network computers than PCs will be sold by the year 2000 sounds somewhat far-fetched now, but things tend to change with bewildering speed in the computer world. Before buying the latest, super-fast PC, it may be worth waiting a little to see how the war develops.

# Aiming to end Fawly image of tourism

Surly, arrogant, and thrashing cars with a tree branch, Basil Fawly is still the image that defines the hotel trade in Britain and the UK tourism industry generally — poor service, high prices, low quality, and a low-paid, low-class area of life and work.

Ministers and tourism leaders joined together in a fresh initiative yesterday aimed at dispelling the Fawly image.

Virginia Bottomley, Heritage Secretary, Sir Terence Conran, the restaurateur, and tourism industry chiefs spelt out their vision for the future — one a world away from Fawly Towers.

Mrs Bottomley said tourism and hospitality were great wealth creators that would help to generate about a million new jobs in the next ten years.

For some, the idea of a Britain whose employment base is not ICI or GEC, or Sony or Nissan, but instead McDonald's or even Marks & Spencer is a near-nightmare vision. But ministers and tourism leaders were keen yesterday to emphasise that such service sector jobs are not all low skilled. They can and do offer rewards, satisfaction and careers.

Even companies attacked as high turnover and low value-added concerns see training as important. "Training is the key to future profitability and development," said Mike Matthews, a senior executive at

McDonald's. In a study published by her department yesterday Mrs Bottomley suggested ways of improving standards.

In tandem with the success of Britpop and the UK fashion industry, London's restaurants are a key reason behind the city's "hip" reputation — as acclaimed this week by *Newsweek*.

Sir Terence, whose chain of fashionable restaurants, including Quaglin's and Bibendum, have been a significant contributor to London's gastronomic renaissance, struck a cautionary note yesterday. "We can't get chefs for love nor money. We have to send chefs now to Australia to be trained."

But the problem is that many employers in the industry don't see the need for training, viewing it as an unnecessary cost. The study accepts that most employers in hospitality and tourism don't train: 63 per cent of full-time workers and 77 per cent of part-timers receive no training at all. And not only is the industry in Britain bad, it is bad in comparison with other countries.

Officials, ministers and industry leaders recognise there is a long way to go yet. But as Mrs Bottomley said: "This is a start. We can build this up, but only if we invest in our people and get training and quality really in place."

PHILIP BASSETT  
Industrial Editor

## KINGDOM OF MOROCCO MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS GENERAL DIRECTORATE OF HYDRAULIC

### CONSTRUCTION OF THE HYDRAULIC COMPLEX OF DCHAR EL OUED AIT MESSAOUD ON OUM ER RBIA RIVER

#### INTERNATIONAL INVITATION FOR PRESELECTION OF TENDERERS

The Moroccan Ministry of Public Works, General Directorate of Hydraulic calls for an international competition for preselection of tenderers for the construction of the Hydraulic Complex of Dchar El Oued Ait Messaoud on Oum Er Rbia River, which consists of a storage concrete facing rockfill dam located on Dchar El Oued site and a compensation concrete dam located on Ait Messaoud site.

The sites of Dchar El Oued and Ait Messaoud are located respectively at about 50 and 60km of Kasba Tadla town in the province of Beja Mellal in the way to Khenifra city.

The international invitation consists of realising the civil engineering works of Dchar El Oued Dam and Ait Messaoud Dam respectively 101m and 34m high above bases of excavation. The works consists mainly of:

- 1.500 000 m<sup>3</sup> of excavations;
- 2.300 000 m<sup>3</sup> of filling;
- 167 000 m<sup>3</sup> of conventional concrete;
- 60 000 m<sup>3</sup> of rolled compacted concrete;
- 56 000 m<sup>3</sup> of boreholes drilling

This competition applies to civil construction companies.

The companies will be in charge of the entire work with the ability to subcontract some of the specialised works such as boreholes drilling, grouting etc., to approved companies. The subcontractors will be binded by the methods prescribed in the Administration specifications document.

Companies are invited to get the preselection documents setting the participation conditions from "Service des marches" of the General Directorate of Hydraulic.

Requests for proposal documents are available on payment of two thousands five hundreds Dirhams (2.500,00 DH) to the qualified departments of Kingdom Treasury.

The companies will have to submit their responses along with a subscription request no later than November 22<sup>nd</sup> 1996 before 11.00 AM at the following address:

DIRECTION GENERALE DE L'HYDRAULIQUE  
RUE HASSAN BENCHERKOUN - AGDAL  
RABAT - MOROCCO



Larry Ellison, Oracle's founder, says he is out to get Bill Gates



Scott McNeally has announced Sun's version of the NC



## VAT credit helps Betterware to interim £6.7m

By Keith Rodgers

BETTERWARE, the door-to-door catalogue operator which has been fighting its way back after its shares took a hammering three years ago, has continued its recovery with a healthy interim profit rise.

Pre-tax profits for the 28 weeks to September 14 increased 63 per cent to £6.7 million after a value-added tax credit of £1.2 million. Before the exceptional credit, earnings per share increased 31 per cent, from 2.6p to 3.4p.

The results, which were marginally above expectations, were greeted favourably in the City, although memories of recent events mean that there is still some nervousness about the stock. The shares, which peaked at 278p in 1993, before a sentiment turned sharply against the company, rose marginally from 118p to 121.5p on the results.

Turnover in continuing

businesses climbed 16 per cent to £32.1 million. The company, where Peter Hartley is managing director, said the momentum in UK sales had continued with a 15 per cent jump to £28.3 million, while margins increased as a result of tighter cost controls.

Overseas sales, which Betterware plans to build up to half of its total turnover within five years, increased 29 per cent, with average customer spend remaining higher than the UK. The company has two joint ventures with Avon Products in Mexico and Argentina, and is planning to enter a third market next year.

Its Australian direct selling business, which began trading in March, had an "encouraging" start, while the company intends to continue its European expansion from France. Andrew Cohen, chairman, whose family owns

about 50 per cent of the company, said the company was excited about direct sales prospects in the Far East, but was not yet ready to move in.

The company, which paid a special dividend at the year-end, increased the interim dividend, payable on January 3, 18 per cent to 1p. With net cash of about £10 million at the end of the first half, Mr Cohen stressed that the company did not plan any acquisitions, but said further special payments to shareholders would not be ruled out.

Mr Cohen confirmed that the company was approached six months ago by an independent electricity producer about the possibility of selling electricity door-to-door when the domestic power market is opened up, but talks had not yet progressed.

Tempus, page 28



Peter Hartley with some of the Betterware products

## Threat to 200 jobs at Evans Halshaw

By Fraser Nelson

MORE than 200 jobs are expected to be lost at Evans Halshaw, the automotive dealer, which plans to close one fifth of its dealerships in a bid to increase profitability and move towards larger marketing areas.

The company said yesterday that it would either sell or close 19 of its 88 dealerships, most of which are loss-making. Some 220 jobs are expected to be lost. Evans Halshaw is also looking to save £3 million per year from management and operational cutbacks.

Alan Smith, chief executive, said he would be looking at making further job cuts in its central administration. Restructuring costs are expected to exceed £11 million. While Evans expects to raise £18 million from selling around 12 of the 19 struggling dealerships, the company is on course to incur a total operating loss of £1.3 million by the year end. The disposals, which Evans hopes to complete before the end of the year, will also give rise to goodwill provisions of £8.8 million.

The company said there had been no respite from the recent difficult trading conditions, adding that the slowdown in growth that hit the company in August had continued through to September.

Mr Smith said that the impact on margins would hit its year-end results, but said the final dividend would be unchanged at 11p, leaving a year total of 16.5p. Its shares fell 5 1/2 p yesterday, closing at 248 1/2 p. The shares traded at 375p earlier this year.

Profits have plunged for the group, based in Solihull, West Midlands, since the recent downturn in the retail car sector, and a number of dealerships acquired in the early 1990s have not shown the returns expected.

Part of the problem was that motor manufacturers have changed their attitude towards car sales, focusing more on marketing through an area network than by concentrating on an individual dealership. The company will operate from 69 sites once the restructuring is completed.

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## Wellman shares fall after profit warning

SHARES of Wellman fell 15 1/2 p to 33 1/2 p yesterday after the specialist engineering company warned investors that full-year profits would fall short of market expectations after a difficult first half. The company's garage equipment business in the UK and Germany suffered losses, partly as a result of the suspension of vehicle emissions testing by the Department of Transport in the UK and by unsatisfactory margins in both countries.

Falling demand has required restructuring of the UK data recording business to restore profitability, and changes in the distribution channels of computer peripherals in France have led to a decision to withdraw from that market. Group profits before tax were now likely to be little changed from the profits before tax in the previous year, Wellman said, adding that measures including changes in operational management and actions to improve margins have been put into place to correct these problems.

## Top changes at Asda

ASDA, the supermarket chain, yesterday announced changes in its top management including the appointment of Ian Gibson, chief executive of Nissan UK and a non-executive director at Asda for three years, as non-executive deputy chairman. He will be one of two non-executive deputy chairmen, together with Frank Knight who was appointed in June 1993, and he will be directly below Archie Norman, chief executive, who moves to executive chairman's position in December. Allan Leighton is now chief executive.

## GE venture for Wales

AMERICA'S General Electric and Nordam Group, a US aviation company, are joining forces in a new aerospace engineering venture that is to establish its European headquarters in Blackwood, South Wales, creating 170 jobs. A 100,000 sq ft plant will be constructed immediately. The £6 million facility will be run by Nordam Europe, a new company, and is due to become operational next May. Earlier this year General Electric spent £27 million in South Wales on developing a test cell for overhauling the new GE90 aircraft engine.

## African link for Coutts

COUTTS, the 300-year-old private banking arm of NatWest, has linked up with South Africa's Board of Executors Private Bank. The alliance, which will not involve the creation of a new company or cross-holdings, allows private clients with interests in both countries access to each other's services as well as increasing their respective share of the lucrative private banking and investment market. David Went, group chief executive of Coutts, said: "Our clients are becoming more international and in response we have been strengthening our global network in a variety of ways."

## Scott shareholder plea

DON SCOTT, founder and acting chairman of Scott Pickford, has made a last-ditch appeal to stop five rebel investors from securing complete control of its board. In a letter released yesterday, he urged shareholders of the oil exploration consultancy not to support a motion to dismiss Andrew Shrager, Peter Rothera and David Little from the board. He said that the proposal "defies any kind of commercial logic" and was designed only to secure numerical supremacy for the rebels. The rival faction ousted Ian Maxwell Scott as chairman last month and now claims control of 52 per cent of the shares.

## Sema telecoms drive

SEMA, the Anglo-French computer services group, continued its drive into the telecoms market yesterday after buying three phone billing companies from France Télécom for a total of £3 million. It will buy FTILS, which runs billing for mobile phones and TELIS, its land line-based equivalent. It is also buying out France Télécom from Sema Group Telecom — a joint venture the two embarked on in 1992. Sema said the deals underlined its business relationship with the French phone company, which will continue to use Sema for the bulk of its outsourced computer-based work.

## Prospect to raise £7m

PROSPECT INDUSTRIES, the specialist engineering and services group undergoing a drastic capital restructuring, is raising £7.36 million through a placing and offer of new shares to finance expansion. The new shares are priced at 35p, a discount of 12 1/2 p to yesterday's closing of 47 1/2 p. Half are being offered to shareholders on a three-for-eight basis and the rest to institutional investors. The group had a pre-tax loss of £21.3 million in its 1994-95 financial year and expects the pre-tax loss for the year ended September 30 to be no more than £1.5 million.

## T&B acquires US assets

TIBBETT & BRITTEN Group, the warehousing and distribution company, is to acquire the distribution assets of Safeway Inc in California, believed to be the largest grocery warehouse in North America. The facility, in Tracy, supplies grocery goods and other merchandise to more than 250 Safeway stores in Northern California, Nevada and Hawaii. The deal includes 250 trucks and 620 trailers, a 1.8 million-sq-ft facility and 1,400 employees. The company said that it would involve minimal financial consideration.

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## Euro bill 'could be £21bn'

A SINGLE European currency would cost the commercial sector more than £21 billion if it had to comply with compulsory legislative measures, according to European retailers (Leyla Linton writes).

However, voluntary measures would cut the cost to £13 billion, a report by EuroCommerce, the retail, wholesale and international trade representation, said.

EuroCommerce opposes mandatory double-pricing, which it estimates would cost £3.89 billion.

The changeover is currently scheduled for January 1, 2002. Like the BRC, EuroCommerce wants the date for the introduction of the euro put back to mid-February, as January is the busiest time of year for most retailers.

EuroCommerce is in favour of the single currency but believes national and European authorities should regulate only the "essentials".

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## Havelock shares dive on bad news

By Keith Rodgers

SHARES of Havelock Europe, the shop and bank store, plummeted as interim pre-tax profits slipped and the company gave warning about second-half prospects.

The shares fell 84 1/2 p to 283p after the company said that pre-tax profits for the six months to June 30 fell marginally from £2.05 million to £2.01 million. Earnings per share fell 3.8 per cent to 5.1p, while turnover increased 9.8 per cent to £25 million.

The company, whose chief executive is Hew Balfour, gave warning that delays in several major retail orders had resulted in bunching of turnover into the last five months of the year, and difficulty in satisfying demand meant it had to subcontract work, which would affect margins. The cost, combined with extra development work for new customers, will



Balfour: troubled by delays

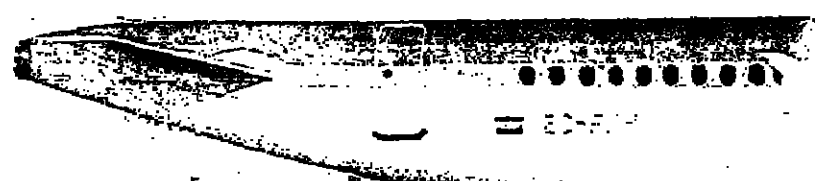
total around £900,000 in the current year.

First-half turnover in the non-food retail sector rose to £15.9 million (£12.6 million). Sales in the banking sector dropped marginally to £8.2 million as merger and acquisition activity delayed refurbishment programmes. The dividend, payable December 27, rose to 1.45p per share (1.2p).

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**IBERIA**



## When witnesses are fearful

Regina v Holt

Regina v Bird

Before Lord Justice Roch, Mr Justice Jowitt and Judge Ann Goddard, QC

(Judgment October 22)

Where a witness of violence and a witness to the violence, out of fear, to give evidence at the trial of the offender, the Crown Prosecution Service's policy document for prosecuting cases of domestic violence, might nevertheless proceed, with the witness's statements being admitted in evidence under section 23 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988.

The Court of Appeal so stated when quashing the sentences of three months' detention to a youth offender, and two years' imprisonment to a woman, in *Regina v Holt* and *Regina v Bird*, on October 14, 1996 at Chelmsford Crown Court by Judge Pearson.

Following his finding on September 16 that the appellants were in contempt of court, in each case a sentence was substituted which allowed immediate release.

Section 23 of the 1988 Act provides: "(1) ... a statement made by a person in a document shall be admissible in criminal proceedings as evidence of any fact of which direct oral evidence by him would be admissible if ... (5) ... the person who made it does not give oral evidence through fear."

Mr Alan Jones, QC, who did not appear below, and Miss Susan Monaghan for the appellants.

LORD JUSTICE ROCH, giving the judgment of the court, said that the background to the case arose out of a story which had been told by a woman, Sarah Holt, and a young man.

On April 12, 1996, she suffered extremely serious injuries in an attack which occurred after an assault entered her ground floor flat. She was rendered unconscious and taken to hospital where she was detained for six days.

While there she made a statement to the police. Sophie Bird witnessed the beginning of the incident and climbed out of a window to seek help. She also made a statement.

The former boyfriend of Sarah Holt was charged with causing her grievous bodily harm with intent. His trial was due to start at Chelmsford Crown Court on September 16.

Both appellants were fully bound witnesses. On that day, after they had indicated that they would not give evidence, the Crown offered no evidence and the judge directed that a not guilty verdict should be entered.

The defendant was discharged.

The judge had been told by counsel in chambers, inter alia, that the appellants were adamant that they had not been threatened. He found the appellants in contempt of court, the contempt being a refusal to give evidence. He adjourned sentence until a later date and granted both appellants legal aid.

The appellants did not tell the judge when he questioned them, nor had they told counsel or solicitors, that they had been subjected to further intimidation. Although there was other evidence available to the prosecution, the evidence of the two young women was central to the prosecution case. Without it the case was bound to have failed.

It was a serious case and the person responsible for the injuries suffered by Sarah Holt was dangerous and should be punished and put where he would not be able, for a substantial period of time, to inflict such injuries on other young women.

Mr Jones had brought to the attention of the court a document published in August 1995, entitled *CPS Policy for Prosecuting Cases of Domestic Violence*.

Under the heading "What happens when the victim changes his or her mind about giving evidence?" it was stated that in such a case the Crown prosecutor must find out why the victim had decided not to give evidence, which might involve putting off the court hearing to investigate the facts.

The steps to be taken were set out, including: "4.8 If the victim confirms that the complaint is true but wants to withdraw support, the Crown prosecutor will consider the following to find out whether it is still possible to continue with the prosecution: ... Could the victim's statement be used as evidence under section 23 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988?"

"The principles to be applied by the court in such cases were correctly stated in *R v Montgomery* (1995) 2 Cr App R 23, 29 and *R v Owen* (1976) 1 WLR 849 where it was held that an immediate custodial sentence was the only appropriate sentence to be imposed on offenders who interfered with the administration of justice, unless the circumstances were wholly exceptional."

Their Lordships rejected the submission that in this type of case it was wrong in principle to send victims to prison where the attack was directed at the victim himself or herself.

Their Lordships had considerable understanding of the view taken by the judge but despite indications by the appellants in the weeks before the trial that they wished to withdraw their statements and not to give evidence, the CPS's sensible procedure was not followed. If it had been, the trial might have proceeded with the statements being admitted as evidence under section 23.

Their Lordships expressed the hope that greater use would be made of section 23 in cases like the present. It was a provision in which Parliament had recognised and tried to combat the growing ruthlessness of some criminals and their associates.

Moreover, their Lordships thought that the judge should not have dealt with the question of contempt on the afternoon of September 16. In the circumstances he should have adjourned overnight.

Their Lordships concluded that the judge should not have proceeded to impose a custodial sentence on the appellants as good as they might have been. In this exceptional case no good would come of keeping the appellants in custody any longer.

Solicitors: Hewitt Burroughs & Co, Dartford.

Regina v Further Education Funding Council, Ex parte Parkinson

Regina v Bradford Metropolitan District Council, Ex parte Same

Before Mr Justice Jowitt

(Judgment October 18)

Any duty to make provision for someone over compulsory school leaving age which, because of his learning difficulties, had by virtue of section 4 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 to be made to his individual needs, rested upon the Further Education Funding Council. The proposed course had to come within those contemplated in the Act.

Mr Justice Jowitt so stated in the Queen's Bench Division in a reserved judgment when dismissing applications by Robert Parkinson for judicial review of (i) a decision of the council on January 18, 1996 that it did not have a duty or a power in law to provide funding for a place at Penguin College of Further Education run by Mencap; (ii) a decision of Bradford Metropolitan District Council not to provide sufficient funding to allow him to attend the college.

Mr John Friel and Miss Deborah Hay for the applicant, Miss Geneva Caws, QC, for the funding council, Mr Roger McCarthy, QC, for Bradford.

MR JUSTICE JOWITT said that the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 established the Further Education Funding Council. Section 4 of that Act, entitled "Persons with learning difficulties", imposed a duty to provide education tailor-made to the specific requirements of individuals.

The funding council could not owe any duty to fund the Penguin course unless it fell within paragraph (j) of Schedule 2 of the 1992 Act and the council had to make its own decision whether it did fall within (j). Provided its decision contained no error of law, it could only be challenged on the ground of Wednesbury unreasonableness (1945) 1 KB 223.

Before a duty to fund arose, it had to be shown that it was in the best interests of the person with learning difficulties. In his Lordship's judgment, the best interests test had to be applied to the Schedule 2 course by asking the question whether there was a reasonable likelihood that the candidate would succeed on the course for which funding was sought.

The phrase "reasonable likelihood" was not the only one which could fairly describe the relevant threshold. The same concept could be expressed in more than one way. Moreover, there was obviously a margin of appreciation permitted to the decision maker.

His Lordship found that there was material on which the council was entitled to reach the conclusion it did, both that the course proposed did not fall within (j) and that it was not in the best interests of the applicant.

Miss Caws conceded that where only part, but not the whole of a proposed course fell within Schedule 2, the funding council had power to fund an appropriate proportion of the cost of the course.

His Lordship would add: subject to the best interests point. That was not the present case. The challenge would fail.

As to the challenge to Bradford's refusal to fund the course, the issue was whether Bradford was under a statutory duty to fund an educational course.

Mr Friel submitted there was a duty under the community care legislation. He relied on section 21(e) of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970. His Lordship rejected the submission that section 21(e) could embrace the funding of a purely educational facility.

Mr Friel also relied on section 24(4)(b) of the National Assistance Act 1948. That subsection created only a power and not a duty. Moreover, it gave a power to do only that which the secretary of state had directed or approved.

Mr McCarthy pointed out that the approvals and directions made gave no mention of the provision of education and his Lordship did not agree that the wording could refer to that which was purely educational.

His Lordship reached the firm conclusion that there was nothing in the community care legislation on which the applicant could found a claim to be provided with purely educational facilities.

Mr Friel put his case on an alternative basis, relying on section 41 of the Education Act (1944), paragraphs (1), (2), (6) and (8) which made provision for further education.

In *R v LLEA, Ex parte Ali* ([1990] 2 Admin LR 822) section 8 of the 1944 Act was described as creating a target duty. Following that, Mr Justice Sedley held in *R v Islington London Borough Council, Ex parte Rixon* (The Times April 17, 1996) that the duty created by section 41 was also a target duty and his Lordship respectfully agreed.

Similarly, in his Lordship's view, the discretionary power was also a target power rather than a power to make provision which was tailor-made for the needs peculiar to a specific case.

Accordingly, Mr Friel was not able to invoke section 41 so as to convert either a general duty or a power to make special provision tailored to meet the applicant's needs.

In his Lordship's judgment, any duty to make provision for someone over compulsory school leaving age which, because of his learning difficulties, had by virtue of section 4 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 to be made to his individual needs, rested upon the Further Education Funding Council. The proposed course had to come within those contemplated in the Act.

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## Interlocutory injunction orders

Practice Direction (Interlocutory orders for injunctions)

The standard forms of order made on interlocutory applications for injunctions had been agreed for use in both the Chancery and Queen's Bench Divisions; all such orders made in the motions court or by the judge in chambers should be in the absence of good reason to the contrary, now follow these forms.

Wherever possible a draft and a disk containing the draft in WordPerfect 5.1 for DOS should be provided to the court to enable amendments to be incorporated and any order made to be sealed and entered immediately.

Lord Bingham of Cornhill, Lord Chief Justice, sitting with Mr Justice Belfield, in the Lord Chief Justice of England's Court, so stated on October 28.

THE LORD CHIEF JUSTICE said:

1 The standard forms of order made on interlocutory applications for injunctions had been agreed for use in both the Chancery Division and the Queen's Bench Division.

2 Attached to the present practice note were the standard forms of the following orders:

Annex 1: Injunction before the issue of a writ of summons.

Annex 2: Order for injunction.

Annex 3: Order containing undertakings instead of an injunction.

Annex 4: Adjournment of application for an injunction.

Annex 5: Application for an injunction treated as trial of the action.

3 All such orders made in the Chancery motions court or by the Queen's Bench judge in chambers should in future, in the absence of good reason to the contrary, now follow these forms.

4 Whenever possible a draft should be provided and a disk containing the draft should also be available to the court. That would enable the associate or officer attending the judge to incorporate any amendments made by the judge and to arrange for the immediate sealing and entry of the order. The current word processing system used in the High Court was WordPerfect 5.1 for DOS.

5 The present Practice Direction was issued with the concurrence of the Vice-Chancellor.

Communications should be sent to Room TM 307, Royal Courts of Justice, Strand, WC2A 2LL, quoting the case number. Tel: 0171-936 6148 between 10am and 4.30pm Monday to Friday.

Lord Bingham of Cornhill, Lord Chief Justice, sitting with Mr Justice Belfield, in the Lord Chief Justice of England's Court, so stated on October 28.

THE LORD CHIEF JUSTICE said that the new forms of orders attached to the present Practice Direction would supersede those previously issued with immediate effect.

The present Practice Direction applied to all Divisions of the High Court.

Inquiries should be addressed to Room TM 305 or TM 306 at the Royal Courts of Justice, Strand, WC2A 2LL, between 10am and 4.30pm Monday to Friday, Tel: 0171-936 6148.

## Forms are changed

Practice Direction (Ex parte Mareva injunctions and Anton Piller orders)

With the concurrence of the President of the Family Division and the Vice-Chancellor, the standard forms attached to Practice Direction (Ex parte Mareva injunctions and Anton Piller orders) (The Times August 2, 1994; [1994] 1 WLR 1233; [1994] 4 All ER 52) have been revised.

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## Barclays Base Rate Change.

Barclays Bank PLC announces that with effect from 30th October 1996, its Base Rate will be increased from 5.75% to 6.00%



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REGISTERED OFFICE: 54 LOMBARD STREET, LONDON EC3A 3AB  
REGISTERED NUMBERS 102667

With effect from the close of business on Wednesday 30th October 1996 and until further notice, TSB Base Rate is increased from 5.75% p.a. to 6.00% p.a.

All facilities (including regulated consumer credit agreements) with a rate of interest linked to TSB Base Rate will be varied accordingly.



TSB Bank plc, Victoria House, Victoria Square, Birmingham B1 1BZ.

## Lloyds Bank Base Rate.

Lloyds Bank Plc has increased its Base Rate to 6.00 per cent from 5.75 per cent p.a. with effect from Wednesday 30 October 1996.

The change in Base Rate will also be applied from the same date by Lloyds Private Banking Limited.



THE THOROUGHbred BANK.  
Lloyds Bank Plc, 71 Lombard Street, London EC3P 3BS.

## Base Rate

Morgan Grenfell & Co. Limited announces that its Base Rate has been amended from 5.75% to 6% per annum with effect from 30 October 1996 until further notice.

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23 Great Winchester Street, London EC2P 2AX  
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Deutsche Morgan Grenfell

## NatWest Base Rate

NatWest announces that with effect from 30 October 1996 its Base Rate is increased from 5.75% to 6.00% per annum.

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NatWest

National Westminster Bank Plc, 41 Lothbury, London EC2P 2BP

The CO-OPERATIVE BANK

## BASE RATE CHANGE

With effect from Thursday 31st October 1996, Co-operative Bank Base Rate changes from 5.75% p.a. to 6.0% p.a.

THE CO-OPERATIVE BANK PLC.  
PART OF THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT  
1 Balloon St., Manchester M60 4EP. Tel: 0161 832 3456

## Hill Samuel Base Rate

With effect from the close of business on Wednesday 30th October, 1996 and until further notice, Hill Samuel Bank's Base Rate is

6.0% per annum

All facilities (including regulated consumer credit agreements) with a rate of interest linked to Hill Samuel Bank's Base Rate will be varied accordingly.



HILL SAMUEL BANK

Hill Samuel Bank Limited - 100 Wood Street - London EC2P 2AJ  
A member of the Lloyds TSB Group

## ANZ Base Rate

Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Limited announces that its base rate has changed from 5.75% p.a. to 6.00% p.a. with effect from close of business 30th October 1996

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## Coutts & Co Base Rate.

With effect from Wednesday 30th October 1996 Coutts & Co has increased its Base Rate from

5.75% p.a. to 6.00% p.a.



440 Strand, London WC2R 0QS



# ACCOUNTANCY

## Auditors must do better

David Chitty says audits should not be a mechanical exercise

Auditors have now been subject to the Joint Monitoring Unit (JMU) for several years. The process is confidential and the details of visits are not revealed publicly.

The JMU does not publish reports on its findings, but periodically articles are prepared, or statements issued, on them. The JMU's comments reveal that the same issues arise in firms of all sizes, on visit after visit. The overall conclusion: auditors can do better.

Audits are a form of consultancy product and, like any project, effective planning is needed. It is therefore surprising that issues repeatedly arise in connection with poor planning and risk assessment. Planning and risk assessment are often undertaken in a very mechanical manner and the approach to the audit assignment does not change from year to year.

This results in failure to appraise the specific needs of the client, to respond to changes and developments in the client's business, or to develop the most cost effective, efficient audit approach that adds value to this business.

A greater investment by auditors in planning and risk assessment will give better feedback to clients and will do

much to raise confidence in the value and purpose of the statutory audit.

Auditors are required by auditing standards to use analytical review procedures to understand the financial information produced by clients. The aim is to identify the trends and relationships when compared with information from earlier financial periods and relevant non-financial data. Often, though, the exercise is poorly performed by inexperienced staff who are given little time to make comparisons.

The end result is a list of percentage variations, supported by vague comments. Analytical procedures should, however, be used to generate questions regarding the client's business, and economic environment, which should be followed up as part of the full audit process.

An overriding concern is that auditors are poor at documenting the results of the procedures. Audit files usually contain much financial information and analysis of the client's financial statements. However, the standard of comment is often poor, giving the view that little thought has been given to the real meaning of the data collected.

Further, in collecting and assessing audit evidence, audi-



David Chitty wants audits to add value to clients

tors are required to perform procedures to ensure that various assertions about the data can be met — that it is complete, accurate, exists, is correctly valued, and is properly disclosed. There is concern that many auditors do not fully understand these assertions.

The final product of the audit process, and the only part of it which is visible to wider public scrutiny, is the audit report contained in the financial statements published by the client. Auditors are required by Auditing Standards to perform a final review of the financial statements to ensure, among other matters, that all accounts disclosures are correct.

client about it. Deficiencies can also arise with the audit report itself.

This article may present a tone of concern and criticism, but it is reporting the issues that have arisen from real monitoring visits performed by professional inspectors. The accounting profession is committed to raising its standards and to giving the best service to its clients. If not, its privilege of independent regulation will be taken away.

Better auditing will result from applying more thought to the process and from treating each assignment as a commercial project, which must add value to the client, rather than a mechanical exercise that must be performed in the face of a demanding book of standards.

No professional will admit that he is giving poor service to his clients. However, many members of the auditing profession are falling short in the service delivered and are unnecessarily exposing themselves to a risk of actions against them for professional negligence.

Auditors can and must do better. If they cannot or will not, eventually external regulators will come and do it for them.

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## Wake up at the back, reporting is going global

Jim Leisenring, referring to the debate on the future direction of accounting that Coopers & Lybrand staged in the ballroom of the Grosvenor House Hotel in London last week, said afterwards: "I was surprised that there was no feeling of urgency."

Leisenring is vice-chairman of the United States Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB). The issues that are being debated are urgent. The future direction of world financial reporting is up for grabs. Yet much of what was said at the debate was muddled and confused, and, in some cases, it did not relate at all to what was happening.

Financial reporting is at the heart of the economic process. It is about how the constituent parts of economic activity are performing. And, equally important, it is about the perceptions of how they are performing. The impressions formed and the understanding of analysts, shareholders, investors and the general public are crucial to the performance of the country's economy. That is why it is always surprising to

formulating rules that would stop people bending them so far that accounts were meaningless.

It does rather beggar belief. Here were the cream of the United Kingdom's financial reporting community. And what were they advocating? That accounts were, by and large, for the directors' own use and that it was unfair to stop directors showing the figures in whatever form best suited them.

It was no wonder that the main issue completely eluded many of the people at the debate. This was the issue that Leisenring had expected to find providing the urgency among the assembled standard setters and finance directors. Put concisely, it is that financial reporting rules are rapidly becoming global and that people in this country need to decide pretty sharply what they want to do about it. There are three alternative routes currently. There are the US rules, known as USGAAP. There are the UK rules, known as UKGAAP. And there are the rules that the International Accounting Standards Committee (IASC) is putting together in great haste to meet a deadline of March 1998, after which their rules may be approved as a route to, for example, the New York Stock Exchange.



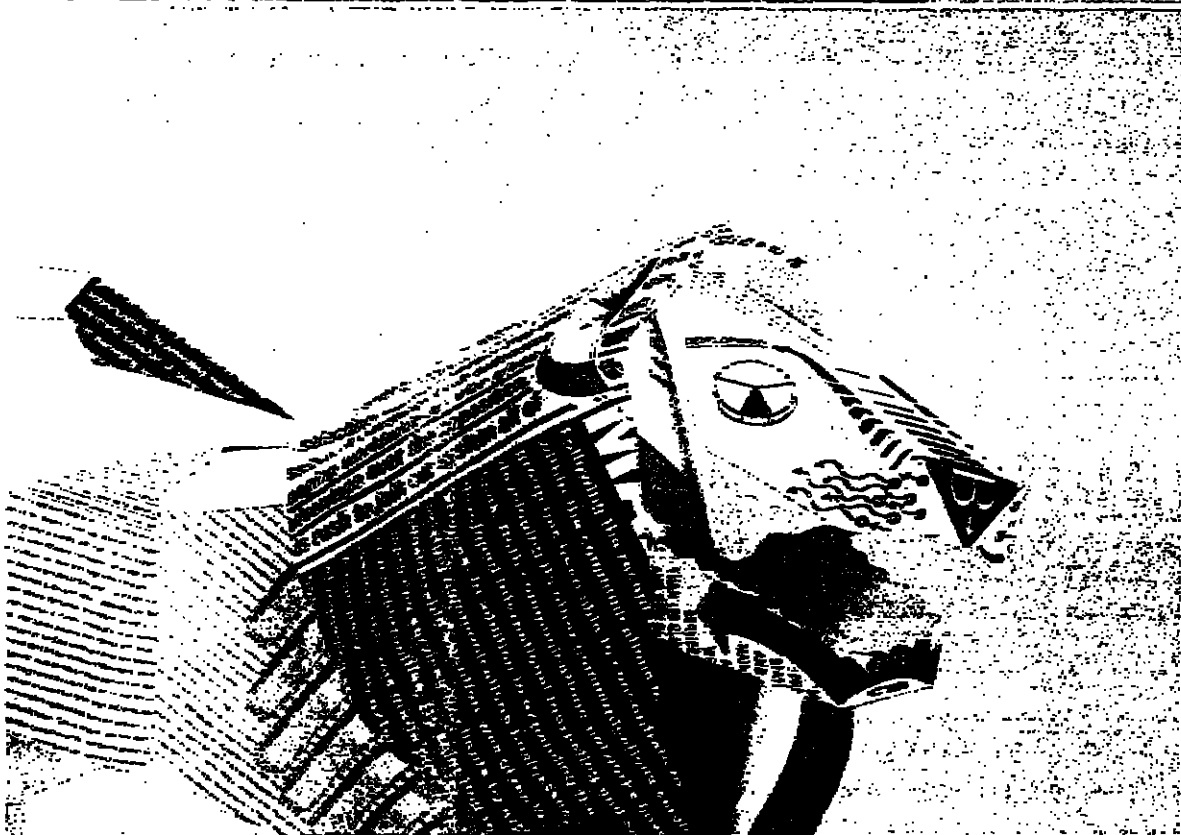
ROBERT BRUCE

That is what it is all about. Companies in all the advanced economies need common global financial reporting rules that are accepted by the world's leading stock exchanges. Except, it would appear, the UK. Here, finance directors seem happy to muddle along and presume that figures produced under UK rules and fudged about in the restating of them for US rules will somehow prove adequate.

Roger Davis even issued an impassioned plea. "If finance directors don't take an interest over the next three to six months," he said, "then the world will have passed you by." No one seemed to be taking much notice.

There was, said Leisenring, "a feeling of 'so what?'. And that is not a view you would hear anywhere else around the world."

There are several possible political strategies for sorting out the mechanism for producing global financial reporting rules. However, unless the finance director community in this country shows an interest in the need for agreed rules, there is little point in taking part in the politics. It is all a bit like the UK's attitude towards Europe. No one cares enough to take part until it is too late and the consequences of that lack of interest have come home to roost.



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### ANY OTHER BUSINESS

#### What's in a name?

THE City firm of Kingston Smith moved offices this week. Gone are the cramped quarters by Liverpool Street Station. It has bought the freehold of the old site in Goswell Road to the west of the City that was once the executive headquarters of the English ICA. And it has done up the old place in fine style. In the basement, where the institute used to store its membership records, there is now a suite of meeting rooms. And it was thought a good idea to name these after the early City livery companies. One room is called "Coopers". Guests at the opening this week spent a lot of time looking for its twin, which would have to be called "Lybrand".

#### Fighting talk

AT THE very grand debate that Coopers & Lybrand staged at the Grosvenor House Hotel last week the fighting talk tended to come from Jim Leisenring, vice-chairman of FASB, the US standard-setting organisation. In particular, he defended the statement of principles that came under so much verbal attack when the UK accounting standards board published it earlier this year. Its critics, he said, were "intellectually vacuous or downright silly". So much for the firm of Ernst & Young then.

#### Half measures

EXPECT fireworks at this afternoon's extraordinary general meeting of the certified accountants. The rebellious Prem Sikka called the meeting and issued ten resolutions for debate. These then had to be sent out to members by Andrea Rose, the chief executive. Resolution No 10 calls for her salary to be halved.

ROBERT BRUCE

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# Equities and gilts sharply lower

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES			
Asahi	117.00	0.00	0.00
Beck's	117.00	0.00	0.00
Carlsberg	117.00	0.00	0.00
Heineken	117.00	0.00	0.00
King	117.00	0.00	0.00
Sankey	117.00	0.00	0.00
Stout	117.00	0.00	0.00
Watson	117.00	0.00	0.00
SANKS			
Bank of Scotland	117.00	0.00	0.00
Barclays	117.00	0.00	0.00
HSBC	117.00	0.00	0.00
London City	117.00	0.00	0.00
Midland	117.00	0.00	0.00
Paragon	117.00	0.00	0.00
Prudential	117.00	0.00	0.00
Scottish Widows	117.00	0.00	0.00
Standard Life	117.00	0.00	0.00
Union Bank	117.00	0.00	0.00
BREWERIES, PUBS & REST			
Asahi	117.00	0.00	0.00
Beck's	117.00	0.00	0.00
Carlsberg	117.00	0.00	0.00
Heineken	117.00	0.00	0.00
King	117.00	0.00	0.00
Sankey	117.00	0.00	0.00
Stout	117.00	0.00	0.00
Watson	117.00	0.00	0.00
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS			
Asahi	117.00	0.00	0.00
Beck's	117.00	0.00	0.00
Carlsberg	117.00	0.00	0.00
Heineken	117.00	0.00	0.00
King	117.00	0.00	0.00
Sankey	117.00	0.00	0.00
Stout	117.00	0.00	0.00
Watson	117.00	0.00	0.00
ENGINEERING VEHICLES			
Asahi	117.00	0.00	0.00
Beck's	117.00	0.00	0.00
Carlsberg	117.00	0.00	0.00
Heineken	117.00	0.00	0.00
King	117.00	0.00	0.00
Sankey	117.00	0.00	0.00
Stout	117.00	0.00	0.00
Watson	117.00	0.00	0.00
FOOD MANUFACTURERS			
Asahi	117.00	0.00	0.00
Beck's	117.00	0.00	0.00
Carlsberg	117.00	0.00	0.00
Heineken	117.00	0.00	0.00
King	117.00	0.00	0.00
Sankey	117.00	0.00	0.00
Stout	117.00	0.00	0.00
Watson	117.00	0.00	0.00
LEISURE & HOTELS			
Asahi	117.00	0.00	0.00
Beck's	117.00	0.00	0.00
Carlsberg	117.00	0.00	0.00
Heineken	117.00	0.00	0.00
King	117.00	0.00	0.00
Sankey	117.00	0.00	0.00
Stout	117.00	0.00	0.00
Watson	117.00	0.00	0.00
ELECTRICITY			
Asahi	117.00	0.00	0.00
Beck's	117.00	0.00	0.00
Carlsberg	117.00	0.00	0.00
Heineken	117.00	0.00	0.00
King	117.00	0.00	0.00
Sankey	117.00	0.00	0.00
Stout	117.00	0.00	0.00
Watson	117.00	0.00	0.00
ELECTRONIC & ELECT			
Asahi	117.00	0.00	0.00
Beck's	117.00	0.00	0.00
Carlsberg	117.00	0.00	0.00
Heineken	117.00	0.00	0.00
King	117.00	0.00	0.00
Sankey	117.00	0.00	0.00
Stout	117.00	0.00	0.00
Watson	117.00	0.00	0.00
BUILDING & CONSTRUCT			
Asahi	117.00	0.00	0.00
Beck's	117.00	0.00	0.00
Carlsberg	117.00	0.00	0.00
Heineken	117.00	0.00	0.00
King	117.00	0.00	0.00
Sankey	117.00	0.00	0.00
Stout	117.00	0.00	0.00
Watson	117.00	0.00	0.00
BUILDING MATERIALS			
Asahi	117.00	0.00	0.00
Beck's	117.00	0.00	0.00
Carlsberg	117.00	0.00	0.00
Heineken	117.00	0.00	0.00
King	117.00	0.00	0.00
Sankey	117.00	0.00	0.00
Stout	117.00	0.00	0.00
Watson	117.00	0.00	0.00
ENGINEERING			
Asahi	117.00	0.00	0.00
Beck's	117.00	0.00	0.00
Carlsberg	117.00	0.00	0.00
Heineken	117.00	0.00	0.00
King	117.00	0.00	0.00
Sankey	117.00	0.00	0.00
Stout	117.00	0.00	0.00
Watson	117.00	0.00	0.00
CHEMICALS			
Asahi	117.00	0.00	0.00
Beck's	117.00	0.00	0.00
Carlsberg	117.00	0.00	0.00
Heineken	117.00	0.00	0.00
King	117.00	0.00	0.00
Sankey	117.00	0.00	0.00
Stout	117.00	0.00	0.00
Watson	117.00	0.00	0.00
DISTRIBUTORS			
Asahi	117.00	0.00	0.00
Beck's	117.00	0.00	0.00
Carlsberg	117.00	0.00	0.00
Heineken	117.00	0.00	0.00
King	117.00	0.00	0.00
Sankey	117.00	0.00	0.00
Stout	117.00	0.00	0.00
Watson	117.00	0.00	0.00

High Low Company Price +/- % PE				High Low Company Price +/- % PE				High Low Company Price +/- % PE				High Low Company Price +/- % PE			
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231	231	233	127	127	127	127	127	127	127	127	127	127	127	127	127
233	233	235	128	128	128	128	128	128	128	128	128	128	128	128	128
235	235	237	129	129	129	129	129	129	129	129	129	129	129	129	129
237	237	239	130	130	130	130	130	130	130	130	130	130	130	130	130
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243	243	245	133	133	133	133	133	133	133	133	133	133	133	133	133
245	245	247	134	134	134	134									

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■ VISUAL ART 1

A Prime Minister's legacy: the treasures of Robert Walpole's Houghton Hall go on display



■ VISUAL ART 2

Can Robert Hughes rekindle the egghead tradition on TV with his new art series?

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ARTS



■ DANCE

Siobhan Davies brings her company, and an atmospheric double bill, to the South Bank



■ TOMORROW

The Spice Girls' first album, and all the other new pop CDs, reviewed by David Sinclair

# Top of the premier's league

VISUAL ART: Isabel Carlisle on an exhibition of sumptuous treasures amassed by the first Prime Minister

The one lacuna in the Tate Gallery's magnificent Grand Tour exhibition is any survey, however brief, of Old Master paintings bought in Italy for British collections in the 18th century. These are the paintings that make up so much of our national heritage today. They are as much Grand Tour "taste" as antiquities or Classical architecture but, for the Tate, both time to prepare the exhibition and space in which to hold it was limited. It has fallen instead to the Castle Museum in Norwich to provide a flavour of what was happening here, as opposed to in Italy.

Houghton Hall in Norfolk is without doubt one of the most beautiful Classically-inspired country houses in Britain. It was built by Sir Robert Walpole, the first Prime Minister, between 1721 and 1735 to house his art collection. Its interiors and furnishings, designed for the most part by William Kent, make it a great ensemble showpiece of Grand Tour taste. It is surprising, then, to discover that Walpole never went to Italy, but instead employed architects who had, and relied on his three sons (Grand Tourists all) and agents on the spot to buy paintings and sculpture for him.

Unfortunately Walpole had a firmer grip on the nation's finances than on his own, and at his death in 1745 the estate was already in debt. His lavish lifestyle, which included pouring vast sums of money into Houghton, made it almost inevitable (as his son Horace foresaw) that some of the contents would eventually have to be sold. The Houghton collection of Old Master paintings was second only to that of the King. Although recently acquired, it was already recognised as part of the nation's heritage in 1777, when John Wilkes suggested in the House of Commons that the collection be bought for the British Museum. Neither George III nor Parliament were prepared to find the money, however, and in 1779 the Empress Catherine the Great of Russia bought 181 paintings from

Walpole's grandson for about £40,000. She hung them in her new picture gallery, the Hermitage. The loss was considered a national disaster — and there begins a tale that continues to this day.

The recently completed restoration of Houghton to its original appearance and the possibilities opened up by glamping in Russia have inspired the Norwich exhibition. Despite the unsympathetic exhibition space, the curators have pulled off a conjuring trick which evokes the different parts of the house as they were in the 18th century. Loans by the Marquess of Cholmondeley from Houghton are generous. They include the Rysbrack bust of Walpole wrapped in a Roman toga, which normally stands on the mantelpiece of the Stone Hall (in front of a relief carving by William Kent of a sacrifice to the goddess Diana). The drawing for that relief is here, as is

Walpole's collection of paintings was second only to the King's

one of the mahogany benches from the hall and two bronze, reduced-scale copies of the famous antique Borghese and Medici vases.

There is some exquisite silverware (including the 1728 Walpole Salver by Paul de Lamerie), an armchair, settee and stool upholstered in crimson wool and silk from the famous set designed by Kent for the Houghton Saloon; family portraits with, unusually, one of Walpole's gardener John Ellys; and some really splendid paintings. Best among them is the magnificent late work by Poussin of *The Holy Family with Saints John and Elizabeth*, based on the same subject by Raphael, of a size and monumentality unusual for that artist — the courier who accompanied it from St Petersburg had problems getting it into the aircraft.

Also from the Hermitage are a portrait of Pope Clement IX by Carlo Maratti and one of an unknown man by Salvator Rosa. Once owned by Catherine the Great, but sold to Andrew Mellon in the 1920s to raise cash (and then given to the Washington National Gallery of Art), are a



Restored to glory: the saloon at Houghton Hall, Norfolk, adorned with paintings from the Walpole collection

small head of Pope Innocent X by Velázquez, a portrait of a man by Frans Hals and one of Philip, Lord Wharton by Van Dyck. Walpole had bought the large Wharton collection of portraits by Van Dyck in its entirety.

Some of these paintings hung in Houghton Hall, others in a specially-built top-lit gallery close by. Knowing that the collection would not survive

intact, in 1747 Horace Walpole published a detailed guide called the *Aedes Walpolianae*. It included masterpieces such as Rubens's portrait of Helene Fourment and Rembrandt's *Sacrifice of Isaac*. He also commissioned engravings of all the paintings. It is not known how many of Walpole's paintings are still in the Hermitage — some were undoubtedly destroyed in the Second World

War — but what a glorious exhibition that would make.

● Houghton Hall: The Prime Minister, The Empress and The Hermitage is at the Castle Museum, Norwich, until January 5. It then transfers to Kenwood House, Hampstead, London, from January 23 to April 20. Principal sponsorship is by Christie's. The accompanying book, edited by Andrew Moore, is published by Philip Wilson at £25.

# Big opinions in a small box

Lynne Truss looks forward to the bracing return of Robert Hughes as television's 'curator of the arts'

I may all have started with Charles Van Doren. And if not, he is accustomed to carrying the can. Star of the famous quiz show scandal of the 1950s, Van Doren was a nice-looking and highly educated young literature professor who betrayed America by cheating on the television quiz *Twenty-One*. Discredited, he was blamed for many things, but among them was this: he had thrown away the chance to inspire Americans in the arts. Under his influence, bobby-soxers would have brushed up their Shakespeare and worn specs for choice. But he let them down, with sadly observable results.

Watching that great communicator Robert Hughes kick off his new American art series *American Visions* (starting on Sunday, 7.20pm, BBC2), the Van Doren problem is bound to hit you. Why have so few inspirational figures pierced the levelling membrane of British television, and fired us to critical appreciation of arts and books? Hughes looks behind him and finds almost no precedents: instead of a three-ring circus, there is only the short, blunt human pyramid formed by Kenneth Clark and Melvyn Bragg. *Civilisation* caught the public imagination in the dim and distant. In the 1970s, on *Read All About It*, Bragg established himself as a sort of MC for the arts. But in the intervening years, it has been tough for eggheads. Even Hughes's own *Shock of the New* was yonks ago.

The trouble is that, in the decades after Clark, the magisterial tone fell into disrepute. Under the influence of fervid Postmodernism, television dispensed with front men; even commentaries were scrapped. Intelligent viewers were expected to make their own sense of the images flowing before them — a technique that served well enough for 40 Minutes but was dead boring for the arts. At its nadir in the

late 1980s, Channel 4 produced the infamous series *State of the Art* — a pretentious, bewildering and wordless montage of ultra-modern art, which not only dispensed with old-fashioned value judgments, but did not even identify what you were looking at.

So new arts series are rebuilding in the ruins, and when Andrew Graham-Dixon's recent *History of British Art* started making grand personal evaluations ("I think of Stowe as the greatest collaborative work of art produced in Britain in the 18th century"), I felt guilty enjoying it so much. Was Andrew Graham-Dixon allowed to say things like that? Was he setting himself up as Lord Clark, or something? Yet paradoxically the more a presenter tells you what to think, the more you trust and respect him. Graham-Dixon showed us the previously unfiled remains of a "Jesse tree" in Wales. "As far as I'm concerned," he said thrillingly, "it's one of the greatest sculptures of the world."

Is television ready for the return of Hughes? A recent profile of him called his demeanour of certainty "Johnsonian", which is about right. In the first instalment of *American Visions* he delivers a paean to Thomas Jefferson, which begins: "If I had to pick one person from all the dead Americans I wish I could talk to" — and he clearly has not the slightest doubt he could hold his own. Hughes's Aussie diphthongs still amaze and entertain; he is large with praise and magnificent with sarcasm. To accuse Jeff Koons of hype "would be like rebuking a fish for being wet".

In the last episode, Hughes laments for American art that it has lost its defining habits of "plain empirical speech and spiritual hope". But if American art is somehow losing those qualities, at least British arts documentaries are finally getting them back.



Robert Hughes: "Johnsonian"

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THE TIMES



David Hughes and Amanda Britton in Siobhan Davies' innovative double bill for Dance Umbrella

# Happier taking the wider view

■ DANCE

Siobhan Davies Queen Elizabeth Hall

SIOBHAN DAVIES is often referred to as Britain's queen of contemporary dance. And with good reason. No other female choreographer has worked so successfully over the years at producing innovative and intelligent dance of the highest quality. No wonder the Siobhan Davies Dance Company has just won this year's lucrative Prudential Award for Dance.

The double bill her company brought to London this week, part of the Dance Umbrella festival, is evidence of her immaculate taste. Working with a first-rate team — composer Gerald Barry, lighting designer Peter Mumford and set designer David Buckland — Davies has created two companion pieces for seven dancers that are rich in ambience and ruminative tranquillity.

The first half, *Trespass*, is set to two Barry piano quartets. The title is a signpost: dancers "trespass" into each other's space, the dance itself trespasses into the music and lighting. Even the

shape of the choreography is an encroachment on form: angularity and softness compete for priority; a flurry of crisp upright phrasing is counter-balanced by slow, emphatic arcs that feel the pull of gravity. Davies also intimates a parallel universe of dance, so that what is happening on stage seems to be occurring in two different places at the same time, co-existing but not always co-operating. Sometimes the sensation is explicit, sometimes implied, but the dancers are absorbed and the effect is absorbing.

*Affections* is set to six Handel arias (sung feistily by the mezzo Budding Verona James), which Barry has scored

for the same instrumental ensemble (piano, cello, violin and viola) he used in *Trespass*. *Affections* shares key elements of design and lighting with *Trespass*, too, and the choreography of the earlier work is echoed in the new movements. But everything has been rearranged to colour a different mood.

The lens of the choreography has narrowed, its focal point trained on individual dancers, exploring their personal histories rather than their relationship to one another. Hence *Affections* is more emotional and inextricably linked to the personality of its interpreters. Yet in a curious way, since these are some of the most expressive soloists around, the choreography is diminished by the weakened group dynamic. It is as if Davies herself, maker of inordinately beautiful dance landscapes, is uncomfortably speaking in close-ups.

DEBRA CRAINE

# Novel view of naturalism

The Weavers Gate

THE lobby of this theatre always looks much the same but once you take the last few steps into the auditorium and there is never any telling what you will find there. The seats could be facing the long side, the short side, divided down the middle, or rearranged to fit into ferry boats. They may be removed entirely and replaced with soil on which actors and audience intermingle, or positioned around a central trench crossed by planks.

This last idea has now been developed, to a degree I wouldn't have thought conceivable: after all, the place was originally two rooms above a pub, and there is only so much excavation a floor will take. The play is the early, naturalist piece by Gerhart Hauptmann, the work that probably earned him the Nobel Prize in 1912, and its subject the doomed revolt by Silesian cotton weavers in 1844

against impossibly low wages and frightful living conditions. Dominic Cooke places his production in an oblong pit where the audience sits around the upper edges, staring down at actors ten feet below, like visitors to a zoo observing curious beasts. I don't think this is the image Cooke intends to foster, though inevitably we feel more distanced from emotional involvement than, for example, in his last production here, *Hunting Scenes From Lower Bavaria*.

The play is interesting, chiefly for the way Hauptmann boldly moves the focus around his cast of 26, but truly

it is the staging that holds the attention. The first half contains three scenes, in factory, hotel and inn, and the shifting is done in the familiar way by the cast. But the second half requires a scene change from the factory-owner's sitting-room to a working loom, and Robert Innes Hopkins's design solution is to build the first on top of the second. When the owner's house is looted, the mob lifts chairs, silver, china and whisks them in slow motion while the floorboards are separated and the loom revealed beneath.

Using a muscular translation by Anthony Vivis, Cooke's use of overlapping talk is remarkably effective. Some performances stand out because the parts are longer, but essentially this is an ensemble production, played with clarity and conviction.

JEREMY KINGSTON

# Hats off to a viol body

■ RECITAL

Fretwork Wigmore Hall

now languid, now darting, hovers over and around the viol like the long-legged fly of the Yeats poem on which the work is based. Miles-Johnson and Fretwork gave a strong performance, with the composer conducting.

THE viol consort Fretwork celebrated its tenth anniversary at the Wigmore Hall in style, despite the non-appearance of the guest star, the counter-tenor Michael Chance, who woke on the morning of the concert to find himself voiceless. The nature of the birthday programme made finding a suitable replacement a Herculean task. Over the past decade, Fretwork has commissioned composers to write works for viol consort, and had selected a number of the most successful of these commissions as part of their celebrations.

In the end, only Michael Nymman's contribution had to go by the board. Pieces by Tan Dun, George Benjamin and Elvís Costello were valiantly saved by, respectively, Emma Kirkby, Deborah Miles-Johnson and Costello himself.

I have heard Fretwork perform Benjamin's *Upon Silence* several times now, and on each hearing I am struck by its accomplishment and potent imagination. The voice,

to create a musical language owing more to Eastern pentatonicism, and combines this with the words of a poem by the 8th-century Chinese poet Li Po to recreate something of the world of Chinese opera. Emma Kirkby swooped and whispered with delectable precision.

Clavin Bryars, in his *In Nomine a Six*, exploited Fretwork's strength as a family of instruments with an homogenised overall sonority. In this, his piece comes much closer to an "authentic" response to the viol, and to the Puerellian idiom in the broadest sense. New sonorities are explored, but with refreshing understatement.

These were well represented in the programme, too, with fantasies by Byrd, Jenkins and Lawes. Fretwork deserves much credit as a patron of contemporary music, but still more so for bringing the highest level of performance to the viol consort.

TESS KNIGHTON





**FILM 1**  
Robert De Niro switches to psycho mode again for *The Fan*, a violent baseball story



**FILM 2**  
... while *The Glimmer Man* offers a mindless farago of serial killers and secret agents

## THE TIMES ARTS



**FILM 3**  
The pit's closed, but the band plays on in *Brassed Off*, a British comedy with character



**FILM 4**  
Anna Campion does not begin to match sister Jane's directorial talent with her debut, *Loaded*

CINEMA: What becomes a Hollywood legend most? Not his showing in the baseball thriller, *The Fan*, says Geoff Brown

# Batty De Niro fouls out again

When the first films were exhibited, audiences were awed and entranced by cinema's basic ingredient, pictures that move. A train pulling into a station platform; a boy playing a trick with a garden hose; a baby at the breakfast table: the Lumière cinematograph took replicas of these simple scenes and gave them the kiss of life.

Now, a hundred years later, cinema offers so many audiences not life, but death, or at the very least, extreme violence. The earliest camera cherished what it filmed: today's camera lens spends much of its time watching the human form blasted by shotguns, slit by knives, engulfed in flames, or seared by a passing rail. This is offered up as entertainment.

Since *The Fan* is directed by Tony Scott, maker of *Top Gun* and *True Romance*, the violence is served up with some razzle-dazzle. We peer at scenes through a curtain of driving rain, or wire mesh, or clouds from a steam bath, or a car windscreen's opaque blur. We also get a major star, Robert De Niro, grimacing under a baseball cap as Gil Renard, a psychotic fan who takes extreme action to help the fortunes of Wesley Snipes, the San Francisco Giants' expensive new celebrity.

But neither of these ingredients make *The Fan* any easier to watch and enjoy. Unlike his contemporary Al Pacino, De Niro is an actor in a rut, shrinking rather than growing with age. We have seen that mad glint and chilling grin too often before we saw it in *Taxi Driver*, in *King of Comedy* and in *Cape Fear*. But this time De Niro has no Scorsese to help him explore the jungle of a psychopath's mind. Scott's speciality is brute force, not finesse; and the script scarcely helps by painting De Niro's character in such obvious colours. A failed salesman of hunting knives who abuses his clients and uses his merchandise to impale cockroaches; a failed husband and father; a perfectionist who believes that "baseball's better than life — it's fair"; how could he not go over the edge when Snipes, his idol, suffers a rotten season?

The visual sense proves no draw, either. The more De Niro goes off the rails, stalking his idol, threatening or taking life, the more gratuitous the

camera antics and pounding rock music become. Neither image nor script leave room for characters to grow: Snipes's star player never advances much beyond flashing smiles and fancy struts, while poor Ellen Barkin's radio reporter only has space to toss her blonde hair.

*The Glimmer Man* offers its own onslaught of violence. People repeatedly crash through windows. Necks are slashed with a credit card. Other parts of the human

**The Fan**  
Odeon Leicester Square  
18, 114 mins  
Robert De Niro as a psychotic baseball fan

**The Glimmer Man**  
Warner West End  
18, 91 mins  
Steven Seagal goes bananas

**Brassed Off**  
Empire, 15, 108 mins  
British comedy with a bit of spirit

**The Last Supper**  
ICA Cinema, 96 mins  
Moving Aids drama

**Loaded**  
Virgin Trocadero  
18, 96 mins  
Jane Campion's sister makes a mess

body fall prey to martial arts blows. This is little more than video store fodder, briefly let loose into cinemas.

There is one saving grace. You can laugh at his star and co-producer, Steven Seagal, who sits on the screen like a beached whale. Seagal has become such a power in the film business that no one appears in a position to tell him that his acting skills are almost invisible, and that his girth does not suit loudly embroidered Nehru jackets, a string of prayer beads slung round his chest. So there he stands, a garish lump with a flat, whispering voice, trying to convince as a New York detective on loan to LA, pursuing a serial killer case that is not what it seems. In between giving people kicks and chops, he says fighting is against his religion: he's a Buddhist.

The film, indifferently directed by television hand John Gray, contains deliberate



Robert De Niro and Andrew J. Ferchland take part in America's national game — working out how long Bobby can milk his performance in *Taxi Driver*

comedy too, mostly assigned to Keenan Ivory Wayans as Seagal's bumptious partner, chafing at his assignment. But the jokes are very feeble. Nor is much joy to be gleaned from the thriller element: scrambling to unite the serial killer with corrupt government agents and the Russian Mafia. Kevin Brodin's script lurches between the vague, the obvious and the ridiculous. Among the supporting cast, the only interesting name is our own Brian Cox, wasting his talents as a shadowy CIA puppet-master. I hope the pay was good.

If you need a respite from physical violence, you could try *Brassed Off*, a fluently made British film full of pomp and Yorkshire grit. This is the work of the writer-director Mark Herman, a Yorkshireman who sold bacon for the family firm in Hull before finding Hollywood finance for a bland and forgettable first

feature, *Blame it on the Bell-boy*, set in Venice.

He has not made the same mistake twice. With *Brassed Off* he writes about what he knows. You can fault his script for its broad dramatic strokes, and the mood's awkward mix of sugar and vinegar. But the depiction of Grimley, a colliery town facing pit closure in 1992, is exact and vivid; and the cross-section of miners and wives stays well this side of caricature. Herman's leads, seasoned character players from film or television, even look convincing dressed in purple uniforms, tooting away on cornets, trombones, euphoniums and the like, or in Pete Postlethwaite's case, wielding the baton. The esteemed Grimethorpe Colliery Band provided the soundtrack, and some obliging extras.

"I know they have a spot of bother at the pit," Postlethwaite says. "but that's sepa-

rate. That's different. This is music." His band members are not such ostriches. If the pit closes, so does the band, even with the national championships looming.

But the arrival of Tara Fitzgerald, her toothy smile and flugelhorn revitalises the male fraternity, especially her childhood sweetheart (Ewan McGregor, from *Trainspotting*). She also causes the script to jump through some awkward hoops as her secret agenda becomes clear, and the miners vote to accept redundancy.

By the end, Herman's film faces two ways at once. It wants to be a heart-warming comedy of obstacles overcome. It also wants to shoot darts at the Tory government. Both targets cannot be hit at once; although any film that attempts to put bite back into British film comedy deserves encouragement.

The *Last Supper* offers another antidote to the casual violence of *The Fan* and *The Glimmer Man*, although since this is a visually polky film from Canada about the last hours of an AIDS sufferer, few people may be prepared to take it. Cynthia Roberts's recreation of Hillier Litoja's award-winning play never attempts to sweeten the pill. The camera stays in the sickroom, close to the skeletal face of a dancer who wishes to bow out gracefully through euthanasia. Action unfolds in real time: if the character is alone and silent, wheezing apart, the film stays silent too. The spectacle is made all the more harrowing by the knowledge that the lead actor, Ken McDougall, died four days after shooting finished: the character's last supper was also his own.

Not that everything is bleak. There is dignity, courage and much compassion here; and

Robert's film performs a genuine service by making us share a loved one's final hours. At the end a few false notes are struck, but they cannot prevent *The Last Supper* being a moving and cleansing experience.

Life gets nastier again in *Loaded*, the feature debut of Anna Campion, Jane Campion's sister, which has lurked unhappily on various shelves since the Venice Film Festival two years ago.

The film, shot in England, has now lost 12 minutes; but no amount of inventive scissoring could significantly improve Campion's hapazard visuals, or inspire interest in the doleful school-leavers who gather at a country house for drugs, breast-beating and the making of a horror video. Some of the cast, such as Thandie Newton and Catherine McCormack, have now moved on to better things. Audiences should do likewise.

## SNAP VERDICT

### 'A classy thriller'

Every week, young film fans discuss the latest releases...

**THE FAN**  
James Crabtree, 19: Sadly, great actors do not always make great films. Despite great acting from Robert De Niro and Wesley Snipes, this thriller is more stylised than stylish.

**David Balfour**, 19: Classy and well-directed thriller with a fantastically tense finale.

**Johan Alkenberg**, 19: A perfect mix of action and drama. Not a conventional psycho-thriller and not particularly scary, but certainly well made.

**Susan Wallace**, 19: A failed father, a failed baseball player and a failed script.

**BRASSED OFF**  
James: Although the story is engrossing, nothing is quite as amusing as watching the ubiquitous Ewan McGregor attempt a Yorkshire accent. The story is sufficiently diverting to distract from the brass band music, but only just. Entertaining, but nothing special.

**DAVID**: This is not just a simple tale of pit closures and brass bands. With no single lead, the community becomes the star. Unfortunately, the film needed to be more focused for the sake of coherence.

**Johan**: Personal triumphs, individual tragedy and industrial depression. Lacking in tension, but some fine performances.

**Susan**: An intelligently written script which is both atmospheric and sensitive. The interjections of typical Yorkshire humour give a bitter-sweet touch.

**THE GLIMMER MAN**  
James: I liked this film all the way until the credits ended: the opening credits. Awful and recommended to no one.

**David**: Pathetically made rubbish. Steven Seagal yet again tries and fails to portray an enigmatic action hero. This is a cheap imitation of *NYPD Blue*.

**Johan**: The once funny Keenan Ivory Wayans is boring and leaden alongside the even duller Seagal. Terrible.

**Susan**: Predictable and overly compulsive action; everything either explodes, is shot or falls in slow motion from a top-story apartment. Crucially awful.

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## POP: Songs and sneers from the North and a commanding act from Mali Platinum goes well with jaded

A WHIRLWIND period in the seven-year history of the Beautiful South began late in 1994 with the release of *Carry On Up The Charts*, a singles anthology that drummed home just how many times their always accessible, usually sardonic songwriting had touched a national nerve. That collection has now sold more than two million copies in this country alone, and rolled out the red carpet for their new studio material, on which Midos continues as executive producer.

Thus with a Top Five single, *Rotterdam*, already in the bag, its new parent album *Blue is the Colour* opened its account this week by cruising straight to No. 1. As they

continue this current tour, the band have already confirmed plans to top themselves, as it were, with a set of arena dates next April including two at the Albert Hall. Perhaps not the world, but Britain, at least, is their oyster.

Given the group's sarcastic pretext — the very name of the Hull-based act is a sneering reference to the London-centric industry they have conquered — one should approach their live show expecting a high degree of fashionable ennui. For their fans, this is not something to be endured, but an essential aspect of the appeal.

Several other new songs decorated the setlist, but the evening was nonetheless a celebration of the astonishing success of the retrospective album. *You Keep It All In*, A

### The Beautiful South Empire, W12

Vocalists Paul Heaton and Dave Hemingway delayed their entry until after the first number, for which Jacqueline Abbott took the lead on *Don't Marry Her*. This opening song from the new album is a typically two-edged device, its sugary melody disguising a confrontational lyric about social and sexual conventions. An audience that had helped the album into pole position was already word perfect.

Several other new songs decorated the setlist, but the evening was nonetheless a celebration of the astonishing success of the retrospective album. *You Keep It All In*, A

## Radical overtones

Oumou Sangare  
Bloomsbury Theatre

harp lute that is plucked fiercely, and the mesmeric rhythms of the djembe drum. This is augmented by electric guitar and bass to produce a funky, blues-laden pulse which at the same time remains deeply traditional. It provides the perfect foil to Sangare's voice which conveys centuries of tragedy as she rails against the indignities and injustices heaped

upon West African women. As a performer, Sangare commands attention in striking traditional robes, whether dancing with her two women chorus singers or spinning and catching the calabash, a large basket hung with jangling cowrie shells which is used as a percussive instrument. Sangare fights for freedom yet respects tradition and has the charisma to become a radical icon in the manner of a Bob Marley or a Nina Simone. She is also incredibly professional: due to a strike on Eurostar in Brussels, Sangare and her band arrived in London only 75 minutes before they were due on stage and scarcely had time for a sound check. She still triumphed and the sell-out audience never would have known of the backstage dramas.

NIGEL  
WILLIAMSON

## Valkyries finally run out of puff

OPERA

Die Walküre  
Covent Garden

THE curse of Alberich hung over the performance of *Die Walküre* at Covent Garden last Friday. The new Brünnhilde lost her voice and had to be replaced for the last act, the Wotan was also audibly tiring by the end, while the Sieglinde should never have been allowed on the stage in the first place.

Anne Evans had been scheduled to take over the role of Brünnhilde from Deborah Polaski in the second cycle, earlier in the month. She was known to be apprehensive about it, and the switch was delayed on the grounds of insufficient rehearsal time. On Friday, as soon as she bounded on as the high-spirited adolescent of Richard Jones's conception (she soon grows up), it was clear that something was amiss. The valkyrie cries were not at all bad, but she was plainly ill at ease — when she should have been jocularly gesturing a high note with an upturned finger, she pointed down — and her singing throughout the act rarely matched her reputation as one of the finest Brünnhildes of the day.

After the interval, the Royal Opera's director, Nicholas Payne, came on to explain that Evans had sung herself hoarse and would be replaced by her valkyrie sister, Gerhilde (Penelope Chalmers), with Patricia Cameron stepping in from the chorus as the new Gerhilde. Both substi-

tutes were admirable, Chalmers breezing through the production with convincing acting and some sensitive, if lightweight, singing.

John Tomlinson, who has hurried himself at the role of Wotan unsparingly night after night, succumbed at last. But the more interiorised reading that emerged as a result in Act III had much to offer. The same cannot be said of the Sieglinde of Ulla Gustafsson, whose poorly supported, below-the-note tone remains an embarrassment.

Bernard Haitink's conducting of Wagner is as unpredictable as ever. He produces lyrical and thrilling sounds when required, but his response is essentially to musical values, not dramatic or verbal ones. The meaning of the drama seems to pass him by, with the result that he gives little support to the singers.

In spite of everything, Jones's scarily honest, disturbing and profoundly moving production made an indelible impression on an enthusiastic audience.

BARRY  
MILLINGTON



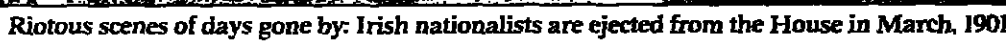




**Roy Jenkins** is entertained and educated  
by a collection of political sketches that  
bring parliamentary history to life

Christopher Silvester has therefore not produced, or even attempted, a conjuncture between literature and Parliament. But he has assemb-

quith, I thought I knew well these two stories. Yet I find that after reading Silvester's book, I know them much better, and more in the



Even those who gently satirised Parliament did so against a background of affection and respect. Trollope, who tried unsuccessfully to be elected, regarded being a member as "the greatest honour

The style and opportunities of the sketch writers were very different in earlier days. Their work was supplemented by extensive straight reporting. They were not required to be mocking at all costs. And they were given much more space, even in the popular papers. William Barkley was for instance allowed to provide

There are one or two errors of designation or date, but where so much fascinating information is provided an occasional lapse is inevitable. A little more serious is the frequent failure to give the date of an incident where the description of it is in a volume of memoirs published many years later. But these are quibbles. It is a splendid and highly readable anthology.

**Tibor Fischer**  
AN  
INTELLIGENT  
PERSON'S  
GUIDE TO  
PHILOSOPHY  
By Roger Scruton  
Duckworth, £12.95  
ISBN 0 7156 2736 8

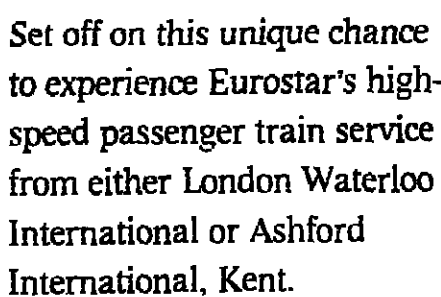
I hazard a guess that a statement such as: "Dogs, apes and bears have desires, but they do not make choices" will guarantee him a lively reception in zoology departments. It may well be that there is some barrier setting us aside from the rest of the animal kingdom, but after the work of E. O. Wilson and others, it's risky to lose off simple responses like that.

**D**oing philosophy on your own, however, is like doing karate on your own: ultimately there's no substitute for full contact. The *Intelligent Guide* nevertheless contains wonderful stretching exercises (and Duckworth deserves some award for this and the excellence of its other titles).


But it is the clash of ideas, just as with the collisions in a particle accelerator, that reveals the constituents and the strength of your thoughts. It is a pity that Scruton doesn't include his phone number, because he is, in effect, standing on the other side of the pitch along with Descartes, Kant and Wittgenstein chanting: come and have a go if you think you're hard enough.

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\*Free Eurostar tickets are subject to seat availability. Due to seasonal demand, free tickets are not available for travel from December 30, 1996 to January 5, 1997 and March 25, 1997 to April 10, 1997 inclusive. Abridged terms and conditions appeared in Monday's paper and will appear again on November 16. Full terms and conditions will be included with your information pack.

## President Clinton looks ahead on the campaign trail

**R. W. Apple, Jr.**  
**CLINTON**  
**The President They**  
**Deserve**  
**By Martin Walker**  
*Fourth Estate, £20*  
*ISBN 1 857 415 X*

He understands how lucky Bill Clinton has been, noting correctly that he would never have survived the New Hampshire primary if the opposition had not been so feeble — if Bob Kerrey had run a competent campaign, or if Mario Cuomo or Al Gore had summoned the nerve to run. And he understands how Bill Clinton's luck of discipline (in matters sexual as well as political) is balanced by an indomitable will that has carried him through a career filled with crises.

Walker's book takes the reader into the Clinton political headquarters during the 1992 campaign, disclosing details about staff and strategy that show how the Presidency was won. It reports on the tug-of-war that developed between Clinton's Oxford and Little Rock friends on the one hand and his political advisers on the other, and how James Carville, the Cajun populist, had to watch the inauguration

**R. W. Apple, Jr**

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**CLINTON**  
*The President They Deserve*  
By Martin Walker  
Fourth Estate, £20  
ISBN 1 857 415 X

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ot from a choice seat but on  
administration at home. That was a  
selling moment the first days  
of the Administration were a  
mess partly because the *Arkansas*  
mailed a failed to protect  
the new President from political  
boobytraps.

But this is a book that  
specialises in giving Clinton  
the benefit of the doubt. That is  
unforgotten in the introduction.

Clintons. So while the  
treatment is given here to  
Whitewater affair and other  
scandals, relatively little is  
made of the Clintons' bobbing  
and weaving as they sought to  
cover up. It is not necessary  
embrace far-fetched theories  
regarding Vince Foster's death  
to see that both Clintons, and  
especially the President, are  
notably economical with the  
truth, or that they are inept  
judges of political associates.  
It is surely the President's  
fault, not just the poisonous  
gift of fate, that so many  
people in his Administration  
went to jail or faced investigation  
by special prosecutors.  
Walker tends to blame it on  
conspiracy by right-wing ele-  
ments in the press.

More important, I think Walker misunderstands the state of play in the Democratic Party and the electorate as a whole. "The old Democrats

he writes. "had broadly achieved what they set out to do, and had for a generation suffered from a general bafflement about what to do next." Well, no. They had not solved the problem of poverty in America, nor the problem of racism, to choose two of the great goals of "old Democrats" like John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson, and they had alienated the voters in trying. The problems remained, but they had neither the means nor new ideas to solve these

At times, Clinton understands this, as in his campaign for re-election, which has been marked by only the most modest new initiatives and, notably, by his acceptance of a welfare "reform" that has infuriated many liberal backers. At times he does not, as when he and Hillary Clinton grossly overestimated the force of his electoral mandate, chose a largely discredited social engineer named Ira Magaziner to help them reform the nation's health care system and came up with a plan that preposterously complicated that system. The President could not fathom it. It failed not because of nefarious entrenched interests or a hostile press but because the Clintons overreached. His (their) comeback began only when Dick Morris came back on board and the President scaled down his plans.

**R. W. Apple Jr** is Washington Bureau Chief of The New York Times.

clears, his chest hair falls out, and he wakes up one morning as a woman.

The shock of the event is compounded by the calmness with which the narrator takes it. But one searches in vain for any guiding purpose, such as an exploration of the artificiality of gender roles. At most, it

might be seen as an homage to Virginia Woolf, the poet laureate of self (although, even at its most self-referential, *Orlando* maintains a narrative drive).

woman; all that counts is that he or she is. Throughout, the narrative voice remains constant: descriptions of menstruation replace those of masturbation; while the feminist sentiments which are expressed on a Turkish holiday might just as easily come from an enlightened man.

THEN, AFTER 250 pages, the novel springs to life. The narrator falls in love with Tito, an Hungarian immigrant. At last, Martel creates a second character rather than simply itemising him and develops emotions as well as perceptions. This is followed by a powerfully delineated rape, during which what has previ-

ously been a typographical trick (the use of split pages to convey different languages) becomes a vivid expression of a fragmented self.

are the book's saving graces are Martel's breezy style and witty insights. But they come at a high price. Background information filters the foreground, with far too many lists, traveleagues and synopses of abortive fictions. The narrator's perceptions are too rarely tested against anything other than the reader's sympathies. Unlike other 20th-century metamorphoses, *Self*s is not metaphorical. Given the acclaim for Martel's previously published stories, one can only presume that its pointlessness is the point.

MICHAEL ARDITTI



Peter Ackroyd is inspired by the life of a novelist who challenged social conventions and changed the course of English fiction

## Above the dead provincial level

GEORGE ELIOT  
A Life

By Rosemary Ashton  
Hamish Hamilton, £25  
ISBN 0 241 13473 0

To my dear husband, George Henry, Esq.,  
I give this MS. of a work which would  
never have been written but for the  
happiness which his love has conferred  
on my life  
Marian Lewes  
March 23. 1859

Eliot's dedication to George Lewes on the manuscript of *Adam Bede*

When a cast of her head was shown to a celebrated physiognomist, he believed it to be that of a man, Charles Dickens, in one of his many fits of peevishness against other writers, described her as the ugliest woman in London. He ought to have added that she was also the cleverest, but he would never have admitted the great theme of this biography — George Eliot is possibly the most resourceful novelist in the English language.

Mary Anne Evans was born and raised in what she called "fat central England". She was a serious, even severe, young woman who took up Calvinism with all the fervid intensity which marked her later attachments and beliefs. On her first visit to London, she bought as a souvenir Josephus's *History of the Jews*. But the promptings of genius are stronger than the dictates of even the most religious conscience, and before her 21st birthday she confessed to an "ever struggling ambition". That ambition was being regularly thwarted in the Midlands, of course, and at one concert in Birmingham she had the good sense to burst into tears.

At the age of 23 she renounced her Christianity and alienated her father by refusing to attend divine service. But even though she had become a free thinker, she was by no means a free spirit; she kept on falling in love with older or married men, only to be rebuffed in the most painful manner. She wished to be loved rather than admired and the

passionate intensity of her nature threatened to make her look ridiculous.

Her career as a writer began, typically, with her translation of Strauss's *The Life of Jesus Critically Examined*. She might have remained a blue-stocking from Coventry, but the death of her father also released her; she travelled to London, and promptly fell in love with George Chapman. He did not return her advances, but, in more than a fair exchange, installed her as the clandestine editor of his *Westminster Review*. She was obscured simply because a respectable periodical could not be edited by an unmarried woman, but she did find herself at the centre of a group of liberal "progressive" writers who set the tone of mid-century English culture. One of those writers particularly impressed Marian, as she now styled herself, and her illicit relationship with George Henry Lewes became the central fact of her life.

Rosemary Ashton is in the fortunate position of having already written a biography of Lewes, so she is particularly good on the human and social detail surrounding this indiscreet partnership. Marian herself was branded by her enemies as a mad woman gone beyond all shame, and she was altogether shunned from what could then justly be called polite society.

Her great fame began with the publication, in 1859, of *Adam Bede*; it was only her second book, but it was one of those rare achievements in which freshness of perception and inventiveness of style change the nature of fiction itself. She understood that ideas can wonderfully furnish a work of fiction — not ideas in some nebulous abstract form but, rather, those deeply embedded within the struc-

ture and movement of the narrative. Rosemary Ashton makes a very suggestive connection with *The Mill on the Floss*, where the narrator speaks of "the onward tendency of human things" at precisely the moment Darwin published *The Origin of Species*.

Yet her own life was resonant with stirrings and impulses which quite match the larger movements of the world, and Rosemary Ashton provides a sympathetic description of her "intolerable" situation which simply had to be tolerated. She also gives a convincing account of her subject's temperament — George Eliot was sensitive and diffident, yet at the same time stubbornly independent. She wrote of her "isolation" or "excommunication" from the world and she was prone to morbid self-depreciation. The wonder is that she could write novels instinctively with what her biographer calls "sympathy, humour and genius".

Her fiction is not always of the same intensity. She went through a difficult "middle" period with the publication of *Romola* and *Felix Holt*. But these only represent a different kind of genius, as if she were mustering all her strength for *Middlemarch* and *Daniel Deronda*. Her life might even be seen as a parable for other writers, with her steadiness of purpose and intensity of concentration

matched only by what she once called a "fastidious yet hungry ambition".

Hers was a great career, then, coming to its fulfilment in two of the greatest works of English fiction. She said that in *Daniel Deronda* she had wished "to widen the English vision a little", and she succeeds marvellously in a book which combines a Jamesian sense of the social world with a transcendent vision of the "life that can shiver and mourn, be comforted and rejoice".

She once described her writing as "a set of experiments in life", but she was accustomed to experiment with her life as well. Just over a year after the death of Lewes, for example, she married a man 20 years her junior. John Cross adored her, but even her closest acquaintances were more than a little surprised at the spectacle of an elderly lady novelist throwing herself into the arms of a relatively young man. But why should she, who created the unexpected feat in her fiction, not perform a similar feat in her life? She also once remarked that denouements can be unreasonable — perhaps that is why, on their honeymoon in Venice, John Cross leapt into the Grand Canal. The incident has never been properly explained, and it can only be supposed that it is not safe to sleep in the same bed as one's idols. She was the most extraordinary Englishwoman of her century, and this latest biography brings the painful drama of her existence properly to life.

## Prometheus singed by his own flame

Michael Gove on a politician whose career was damaged by conviction

Enoch Powell was not so much a prophet as an obstacle on the Conservative Party's journey to its current hegemony. Free-market thinking and the desire to preserve the nation's independence dominated political debate despite, not because, of the influence of the Black Country seer.

Mr Powell is one of the most impressive political thinkers and powerful orators the Conservative Party can boast this century. He can claim to have won the 1970 election for the Tories and lost both the 1974 polls for them. He can also claim, in his advocacy of liberal economics and his warnings at the time of British entry to the then EEC, to have been a political Prometheus.

But rather than irritating the Tory party his ideology was seen as polluted by his stance on immigration. Robert Shepherd has produced an attractive life of a politician built on a great scale but brought low by his own hand. Mr Shepherd is the author of an acclaimed biography of Powell's former ally Iain Macleod and rendered Macleod with more instinctive



Enoch Powell's 1968 prophecy of "rivers of blood" flowing from racial violence has not come to pass: a hoarding on Nariman Point depicts Bombay's reaction to his call for assisted repatriation

sympathy than he accords to Mr Powell. He has also been handicapped by a lack of access to the man and his papers. That honour has been reserved for Simon Heffer, the biographer of Thomas Carlyle, and any definitive judgment of Powell's life and thus Mr Shepherd's book must wait until Mr Heffer's work is published. Nevertheless, Mr Shepherd's biography is an

excellent interim study. He deals elegantly with Mr Powell's early life and influences. He traces the roots of Mr Powell's distinctive oracular style to the courts of Trinity College, Cambridge where the grammar school boy from Wolverhampton made himself apprentice to the Classical critic A. E. Housman. Housman's precision of thought and expression allied to a fierce moral energy came from what Mr Powell himself has called "the inner furnace of passion for truth and logical thought" and "indignation against every instance of influence which could corrupt it."

The lessons from that same furnace occasionally flashed behind Mr Powell's eyes as he saw logic twisted, on Europe or Ulster, for the sake of some corrupting influence.

Mr Powell was part of the same postwar political generation, the class of 1950, as Iain Macleod, Ted Heath, Reginald Maudling and Robert Carr. Along with others of that generation, Powell seemed to accept the collectivistic case for Labour's larger state and the lack of faith in Britain's Empire and power that found agonised expression at Suez. But although Powell contributed to the "One Nation" pamphlet in 1950 that argued of the Attlee reforms, "the wall

of social security has been built at last" and although, as early as 1954, he had rejected the British Empire he was swept along by no tide but the force of his own thought.

He was always, as a backbencher, a supporter of free markets and within four months of the Tories winning the 1951 election he was criticising Chancellor Rab Butler for adopting policies too sim-

ilar to the socialists. Although, like Sir Keith Joseph, he was never as rigorous in office his intellectual commitment to the market was resilient. Powell's abandonment of imperialism did not lead him, as it did so many in his party, into a search for the chimera of "influence", whether in Brussels or Washington, but into a deeper appreciation of how the nation and its people should survive. Mr Powell's understanding of sovereignty, his appreciation of the place of Parliament and his recognition that ancient liberties and intelligible rule depended on nobody usurping that sov-

erignty led him to oppose entry to the Common Market and argue for the securing of Ulster fully into the United Kingdom. In both cases his logic was impeccable and he has the bitter satisfaction of the sibyl in seeing his warnings vindicated.

But the time it has taken for his analysis to prevail has been so long because of the most fateful prophecy he uttered. Mr Powell's anti-immigration 1968 "Rivers of Blood" speech may have been meant as a sincere warning but, as Mr Shepherd points out, it was sprung on Shadow Cabinet colleagues as a surprise, quoted from inflammatory and unverifiable letters and delivered in apocalyptic tones.

Mr Powell must be suspected of darker motives, possibly of seeking to appropriate a genuine but regrettable racial feeling in a bid for power. In the end his prophecy has not come to pass and the civil war he feared is nowhere in sight. Moreover, Mr Powell's speech denied him political respectability and dented his other ideas of intellectual respectability. It was no easy task for Margaret Thatcher to rescue defence of free markets and free nations from association with Mr Powell's tainted platform. It is to his, and Britain's, regret that it should be so.

Egypt has the longest hours in the world," signs Aunt Flora as she sits lethargically in the shade waiting for the blistering sun to dip below the sea-filled horizon, and for velvet night to envelop Alexandria. But however long the hours, time in Egypt is running out, for Aunt Flora's family at last.

Out of Egypt is André Aciman's lushly evocative memoir of a childhood spent coddled in the bosom of a vast, flamboyant Sephardi Jewish family in Alexandria in the 1950s. It was the fortuitous friendship between Great-uncle Isaac and the future King Fouad which brought the family from Constantinople to Alexandria in the first place in 1905.

But now everything has changed, even if Great-grandmother has yet to be told. The Egyptian monarchy has been deposed, replaced by the pugnacious nationalistic Nasser. With the creation of Israel, Jews are not safe in Arab countries any more. And the Acimans, confronted with the prospect of losing yet another fortune, are clinging frantically to an "old world we believed we belonged to because we belonged nowhere else."

Humane, funny and mov-

### Life with Gigi

Natasha Fairweather

OUT OF EGYPT

By André Aciman  
Harvill, £15.99  
ISBN 1 85140 266 5

ing, Aciman re-creates the lost world which he loved with the skills of a novelist, interweaving the opulent past with the impoverished present and drawing on a colourful supporting cast of friends and servants. Dominating everything is the family's preposterous snobbery, usually expressed in vivid Landino insults. Tracing their ancestry from the Sephardim of Spain, they look down on Ashkenazis, and even further on Arab Jews. So when Aciman's father, Henri, falls in love with the daughter of a Jew from Aleppo who is deaf to boot, the family is appalled.

Life for the boy-author is not easy with Gigi for a mother. There are the regular outbursts of rage, expressed by a blood-curdling shriek or flailing blows, whenever "Al-Carsha" (the deaf woman) feels herself mocked by a shopkeeper or undermined by the family. And then there is her voice, which sounds unbearably crude and loud in the presence of his school friends. A voice which, when they are alone, emits "words of love no one can understand, for they weren't even words, just sounds reaching back into her childhood to a time when she couldn't even speak — half words which she sometimes yelled out in the water when we swam together, her voice muffled by the sound of waves, thinned of its coarseness, kind as a seagull's."

But as André grudgingly goes through the motions of a Passover seder (in French, because he speaks no Hebrew) on the eve of his family's personal exodus from Egypt, Israel does not seem to be the promised land. The boy who wanted to be an ambassador, but did not know which country he belonged to, is heading West, via France and Italy, to a life as an academic in America; and to a future as a writer of quite exceptional skills.

## A principled woman — or perhaps she was not

Antonia Fraser

THE SECRET LIFE OF APHRA BEHN

By Janet Todd  
André Deutsch, £25  
ISBN 0 233 99991 9

On the literary stock-market, shares in Aphra Behn have followed an erratic course. High at her death in 1689 (shortly after the accession of William III) they fell away over the centuries to become virtually valueless. Then in the 1970s, a path-finding biography by Maureen Duffy, followed by that of Angeline Goran, drew popular attention once more to the extraordinary potential of a stock which featured "the first woman to earn her living by writing" as Aphra is generally described.

Ten years ago a group of us crouched round a gravestone in the cloisters of Westminster Abbey one freezing night in April. Down the centuries the writing on it had, like Aphra's reputation, virtually vanished. Now it had been recut, thanks

to the generosity of Texian fans and the energy of Maureen Duffy. Once again we could read the lines: "Here lies a Proof that Wit can never be/Defence enough against Mortality." In another generous gesture, in 1989, Germaine Greer published at her own expense *The Uncollected Verse of Aphra Behn*. It seems that Aphra's legendary wit has finally succeeded in defending itself against mortality.

Nevertheless, as a heroine Aphra Behn does present

problems. First, for scholars, there is the fact that so very little is known about her for sure. The second problem concerning Aphra needs delicate handling by feminists. The fact was that Aphra Behn had more in common with Margaret Thatcher than it is comfortable to admit. That is, she was a High Tory with a low opinion of her fellow women, ascribing her talent to the "Masculine Part" in her (as Mrs Thatcher presented herself as an honorary man).

Dr Janet Todd's new biography grapples with both problems, as at over 500 pages it should certainly do. Her method of handling the many uncertainties surrounding Aphra's career is to speculate, speculate and speculate again. It is true that Dr Todd announces in advance that this is



Aphra Behn: mysterious

what she proposes to do and pleads for our pardon. "All I can hope is that the reader, the one Aphra Behn cajoles as her 'Good, Sweet, Sugar-Candied Reader', will begin this biography with 'perhaps' and 'possibly' and end it murmuring 'probably'." Unfortunately too much speculation can have a numbing effect, detracting from Dr Todd's genuinely original scholarship.

This Sugar-Candied Reader for one got quite exhausted by the use of the words "perhaps" and "possibly", and was irreverently reminded of the title of a Flaco Domingo collection of popular songs *Perhaps Love* — to which one critic responded "Perhaps Not". Sentences like the following — and there are many such — do not really advance our understanding of Aphra very far: "Given the later closeness of the half-brothers, Thomas Colepeper is likely to have visited (Lond) Strangford for considerable periods at Penshurst. Possibly he took with him the girl, Aphra, whose mother may have helped fill the gap of his own lost parent..."

This is a shame, not only because it inflates the book unnecessarily, but also because it distracts Dr Todd from her chosen task of analysing the works to find the woman. Here she is able to make a number of perceptive points, especially concerning Aphra's attitude to "lustfulness" in mature women. Todd deriving the conclusion that Aphra

herself thought sex was for enjoyment in its own right, not as a prelude to love or romance. Similarly, Dr Todd handles Aphra's Tory politics and her sycophancy to the incoming regime when James II lost power with intelligence. Her dislike of the mob she ascribes to a playwright's disgust with the audience (are all playwrights natural Tories then?). As for Aphra's fawning salutation to the supplanter of James (her "God-like Patron") Dr Todd argues that she was merely earning a living "in as principled a way as she could" which was not of course very principled. In short, she was acting just like the men around her.

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## Bargains of the week — from a rum festival in the British Virgin Islands to a fly-drive break in Catalonia

## HOTELS

THE Grosvenor House in London is cutting its rates by 40 per cent in the first three months of 1997. Single and double rooms now cost £130 and £145 respectively. Details: 0171-499 6363.

■ **CHOOSE** and buy your Christmas presents while staying at the Sloane Hotel in Chelsea. This town-house hotel, with room rates from £130 a night, sells most antiques to be found in its rooms, such as a Limoges soap dish for £15 or an Edwardian cigar box for £60. Details: 0171-581 5757.

■ **SALISBURY'S** Rose & Crown Hotel, a 13th-century coaching inn on the banks of the Avon, includes admission to an exhibition about Christmas traditions in its weekend breaks, costing £47 a person a night. Details: 01722 399955.

■ **WINTER** breaks at Shrigley Hall Hotel, a country house set in 262 acres of Cheshire parkland, includes golf or beauty treatments, along with breakfast and dinner for the special rate of £70 a person a night, based on double occupancy. Details: 01625 575757.

■ **A NEW** Year's Eve package at Brandstatch Place in Fawkhams, Kent, costs £105 a person for overnight accommodation, dinner, dance, and recovery brunch. Details: 01474 872239.

■ **ENJOY** a three-course dinner at the Haycock Hotel, Wansford, near Peterborough, between December 27 and 30 and January 1 and 5, and stay overnight for £15 a person. Details: 01780 782223.

■ **A TRADITIONAL** Victorian Christmas is on offer at the Oakley Court Hotel, set in 35 acres along the River Thames near Windsor. Price is £435 a person to cover full

board for three days and special seasonal entertainments, with a trip to the pantomime or river cruise included. Details: 01753 609988.

■ **A COMPLIMENTARY** bottle of champagne will await returning shoppers from the new year sales staying at the Gloucester Hotel in South Kensington. The package is available throughout January and costs £109 for two people a night. Minimum stay two nights. Details: 0171-373 6030.

■ **A 50 per cent** discount on mini-bar charges is offered as part of the "business bonus" package at the Conrad International Hotel in Hong Kong, valid until February 28 next year. Rates start at £243 a room a night, and include limousine transfers, room upgrades and laundry. Details: 0990 445866.

■ **THE Grand Hotel du Cap Ferrat**, between Nice and Monte Carlo, has a special offer until the end of April next year (excluding Christmas and Easter) of £356 a person for two nights, including hire car or airport transfers, lunch or dinner and other extras. Details: 0800 998852.

■ **THE television** chef Richard Cawley, of the BBC2 programme *Ready Steady Cook*, is guesting at the Lanes Restaurant at the Four Seasons Hotel in Park Lane from November 11 to 17. Details: 0171-499 0888.

■ **THE four-star** De Vere Hotel in Swindon, Wiltshire, has a special go-karting weekend offer in November at £65 a person a night, through Superbreak Mini-Holidays. The price includes half-board accommodation, along with tuition and practice sessions at a local go-kart track. Details: 0161-238 5257.



Take a short break for £207 to Venice and see the Basilica Della Salute from the Grand Canal

## FERRIES

IT is approaching the season of day shopping trips to France. Among offers available is Stena Line, Dover-Calais for £15 a car, £1 a passenger, valid until December 31 (£10 supplement for Saturdays). Book through Eurodrive. Details: 0181-324 4000.

■ **SCANDINAVIAN** Seaways has a two-night hotel break in Berlin, leaving Harwich on November 3 for Hamburg and onward by rail. Prices start at £203 a person, including breakfast. Details: 0990 333111.

■ **SWANSEA** Cork Ferries has a winter fare of £149 return for a car and up to five adults for travel on the Irish Sea until December 15. Details: 01792 456116.

■ **IRISH** Ferries has a midweek one-way fare available for £79 on its Pembroke-Rosslare route and £89 on Holyhead-Dublin, available until December 17. Details: 0345 171777.

■ **RED Funnell** has a special five-day return on Southampton-Cowes for a car and up to four people for £36. The offer is available from the 10am Monday to Friday car ferry service for any sailing at weekends until December 20. Details: 01703 334010.

STEWART KENDALL/SPORTS PHOTO

## FLIGHTS

FARES have tumbled by up to 50 per cent between London, Antwerp and Brussels after Sabena's joint venture service with Virgin Express. The return business-class fare now costs between £160 and £200, with economy at £90 to £130. Details: 0181-780 1444.

■ **AUSTRAVEL** is offering a £399 return from Gatwick to Perth, with Britannia Airways, departing on November 7. Passengers may stay for between two and eight weeks. Details: 0171-734 7755.

■ **IBERIA** is offering a £99 return from Gatwick to Madrid and from Heathrow to Barcelona and Palma until December 7. The fares must be bought three days in advance. Details: 0171-830 0011.

■ **TORONTO** for £169 return is available from Air Travel Advisory Bureau for flights until November 13, returning by November 26. Details: 0171-636 5000.

■ **FREGATA** Travel is marketing one-night mid-week packages in Prague suitable for business travellers. CSA flights and accommodation at the first-class Forum Hotel cost £279, almost 50 per cent less than the normal air fare. Details: 0171-734 5101.

## HOLIDAYS

VENICE, where singers can now serenade visitors on the canals all day by official decree, is on offer for short breaks from Citalia for £207 a person, including return flights and two nights' bed and breakfast. Details: 0181-686 5533.

■ **BRUSSELS** for two nights in three-star accommodation with return Eurostar travel is on offer for £139 a person from United Air Travel. For an extra £50, you can go first-class and have free meals. Details: 0171-930 5153.

■ **GAMBIA** for a fortnight with half-board accommodation for £559 a person, using a flight from Gatwick next Tuesday, is available from Page & Moy. Details: 0116-250 7116.

■ **A CATALAN** fishing port is the destination for a four-day fly-drive break with Intravel Shortbreaks, with a flight from Heathrow to Toulouse on November 8, car hire and three nights at a hotel in Collioure. Details: 01633 628862.

■ **PUERTO RICO** is available for £381 for a fortnight's First Choice self-catering holiday from Co-op Travelcare, with a flight from Bristol on November 9. Details: 0161-827 5290.

■ **EGYPTIAN** adventures lasting 15 days and starting from Cairo on November 19 are available for £399 a person, a £130 saving, from Top Deck. The price includes accommodation, most meals, a cruise and entrance fees, but not flights. Details: 0171-370 4555.

■ **THE RUM** Festival at the Long Bay Beach Resort on Tortola in the British Virgin Islands can be enjoyed as part of a Caribours holiday from November 22, including seven nights' accommodation

and return flights. Price: £349 a person. Details: 0171-581 3517.

■ **NEW YORK** for three nights is on offer for £449 a person from Major Travel. The holiday, starting on November 28, includes return BA flights and accommodation at the city centre Metro Hotel. Details: 0171-485 7017.

■ **ALL-INCLUSIVE** holidays in Mediterranean resorts are still available this winter from First Choice. A week in Malta costs from £225 a person and a week in Fuerteventura from £349. Details: 0181-380 8155.

■ **SAVINGS** of up to £70 on holidays to the Canaries and a reduction of £50 a person on half-board accommodation at hotels in Lanzarote and Fuerteventura are among price cuts announced by Portadirect. Details: 0990 002200.

■ **LEARN** to scuba dive in the Red Sea with Travelmood for £450, including return flights to Sharm el Sheikh, a week's accommodation at a diving college and tuition. Details: 0171-258 0280.

■ **FESTIVAL** Cruises has announced savings of about £500 on the Bolero for a Caribbean cruise departing from Spain on December 6 for 15 nights and calling at Madeira and several West Indies ports. Prices start at £999 a person and include return flights to Spain. Details: 0171-436 0827.

■ **LE CORBIER** is available for Christmas for £142 a person from Motours. The price is based on five people sharing a studio apartment for a week from December 21 and includes a 5 ski lift pass and return Le Shuttle crossing for car and passengers. Details: 01892 518555.

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## Bring on the new jets

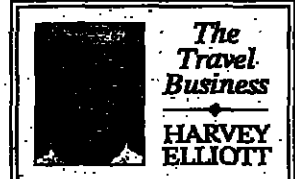
THE illuminated numbers on the bedside clock burnt their message into my dormant brain that it was 05:54 on Saturday: the day I was supposed to be able to lie abed.

But the noise of a large jet aircraft flying seemingly a few feet immediately above my rooftop had broken my slumber. I have had little sympathy, in this column, for noise protesters, arguing that anyone who chooses to live under a flight path can hardly complain when aircraft fly overhead. But then I am generally not troubled by aircraft noise.

Recently, however, there has been a noticeable increase in the number of noisy jets early in the morning. So I decided to find out more about my sleep wrecker and those that followed before the sun was up.

My intruder was shown by the radar-linked computer in the Gatwick Noise Office to have been BA flight 232 from Bermuda, a 16-year-old DC-10 with 182 souls on board due to arrive at Gatwick at 06:50 but which had been blown across the Atlantic quicker than normal by strong winds.

It crossed my house at a comfortable 6,900ft. But weather conditions and the pilot's need to change speed resulted in a blast of sound aimed at Haywards Heath. Between five and seven o'clock that morning, there were 28 arrivals and departures at Gatwick, 11 of which flew over Haywards Heath. The Noise Office explained that recent



westerly winds had forced aircraft to fly over the town in order to land from the east. Local people claim that in the past year the number of complaints has increased by 40 per cent and the number of night flights has risen by 70 per cent.

Officially, the increase in complaints almost exactly mirrors the growth in flights. Yet there is no measure of, let alone, penalty against, inbound aircraft. Only outbound flights are monitored.

This cannot be right. Schedule airlines are enjoying one of their most profitable years and many are finally able to afford newer, quieter fleets. They should be encouraged to buy new jets — and soon. A voluntary agreement reached now, setting a noise limit for inbound flights that is acceptable both to local people and the airline industry, is preferable to the complete ban on night flights being demanded with increasing ferocity.

The Heritage Secretary calls, below, for more help for the leisure industry and, right, points out how it may be failing tourism



Lakeland Village in the Lake District, and opening in the spring, will offer accommodation at prices such as £164 for a family of four staying four nights

## Britain opens the door to more holiday villages

By TONY DAW

HOLIDAY villages, which are increasing in number and attracting hundreds of thousands of families, received Government backing in a speech by Virginia Bottomley, the Secretary of State for National Heritage, this week.

She called on planning authorities to work in partnership with the leisure industry to encourage such developments only a day after the High Court had given the go-ahead for a controversial £100 million scheme in Kent.

Mrs Bottomley told a planning and tourism conference that the authorities should take into account the needs of the tourism industry and the economic and employment benefits it offers.

She said: "There are good examples of local planning authorities working in partnership with the private sector

to help bring on-stream the sort of new developments, such as all-weather holiday centres, that we need to meet changing consumer demand. I would commend this to other authorities."

Kent County Council and the local Shepway council had supported plans by Oasis Villages, part of the Rank Leisure group, for a 430-acre village in an area of outstanding natural beauty but were opposed by an action group and the Countryside Commission.

A Government planning inspector ruled that the benefits of the village, which will accommodate 4,500 guests, outweighed any environmental harm and his decision was upheld in the High Court earlier this week.

The decision and Mrs Bottomley's

encouraging words are likely to pave the way for further villages. The Kent site will be the fifth to be built in Britain and the second developed by Oasis. The company will open its first village for 3,500 visitors in the Lake District this spring to rival the three already in operation by Center Parcs.

Both companies are keeping future plans close to their chests but Julie Gould, a spokeswoman for Oasis Villages, said: "Research by our company and the English Tourist Board suggests that there is demand in the United Kingdom for between six and eight holiday villages."

The existing ones have been running 90 per cent full this summer, showing there is a pent-up demand for this type of product." The company launched the brochure for its Lakeland village last week and says it is delighted with the response.

The village offers a range of accommodation, from one-bedroom apartments to four-bedroom suites. Prices for a family of four in a two-bedroom lodge start at £164 for a two-night stay of four nights and three-night weekend breaks in a three-bedroom detached lodge cost £269. Features include a "world of water", a lake offering water sports, a country club with squash courts, snooker tables, plus a gym and a health centre.

James Whittell, managing director of Oasis Villages, said: "Our concept is based on the ever-increasing demand for a quality short break that offers quiet enjoyment of the countryside."

## Young people need training for tourism

By RICHARD DUCE

BRITAIN'S tourist industry risks losing out to other European competitors unless it resolves problems of poor pay and training, according to a report for the National Heritage Department, published yesterday.

Hotels and restaurants will not attract quality applicants for jobs unless young people can be urged to treat the industry as a worthwhile career prospect.

According to the report, based on research by the accountants Coopers & Lybrand and the London Business School, earnings from tourism in Britain increased by 5.9 per cent each year between 1980 and 1992. The European average was 8 per cent. It said: "In an increasingly competitive international market we cannot afford to ignore consumer research that suggests that the quality and value for money of our tourist product does not always meet the customers' expectation."

The report goes on to state that 45 per cent of full-time staff and 74 per cent of part-timers had received no job-related training. The figures gave "cause for concern", as 55 per cent of all staff are part-time. Employers believed the low profile and poor image of the industry deterred many youngsters from seeking a career in it. Skill shortages had been exposed at craft level, particularly for chefs.

Average earnings are 40 per cent lower than in the rest of the service sector. Despite such drawbacks the tourism industry continues to grow and over the next ten years it is estimated that employment will increase by 400,000.

Launching the report yesterday, Virginia Bottomley, the Heritage Secretary, said: "If we are to continue the



Mrs Bottomley: urging a co-ordinated programme

current growth and keep up with the competition, it is vital that the industry attracts, motivates, develops and retains people who will build up a first-class workforce. We must get the message across, particularly to young people, that this is an industry that can offer early responsibility, flexibility, variety and real opportunity and reward."

"The payoff, in terms of increased customer satisfaction, is clear. One employer found that an initiative combining training and performance measurement led to a 50 per cent reduction in complaints and a 400 per cent increase in compliments. By making a concerted effort, we can start the process of developing a first class-service culture throughout British tourism and hospitality."

She is urging a co-ordinated programme which would include regional tourist boards, trade associations and the Training and Enterprise Councils.

People Working in Tourism and Hospitality is available from the Heritage Department.

## Executives tire of activity breaks

By HARVEY ELLIOTT

OVERWORKED executives have confounded travel industry experts by flocking to all-inclusive hotels in the Caribbean where they can "flop out" rather than have adventure and activity breaks.

Martin Brackenbury, chairman of the Federation of Tour Operators, said this week that the industry had been wrong when it had predicted a big growth in "activity" holidays.

He explained: "We expected that holidays would become longer and people would seek to do more. The reverse has been the case. People have sought to flop out and do as

little as possible. We put it down to the immense pressures imposed on people in work in the 1990s."

On holiday, most people are looking for an alternative to the stress of their working lives, he said. "This is why the all-inclusive holiday has been such a runaway success. It provides a sense of freedom with nothing extra to pay, all entertainment laid on, no physical exertion or mental effort required — in fact, a kind of holiday hospital from which you return re-

freshed and ready to face the stresses and strains of work."

While all-inclusive hotels in the Caribbean are booming, the European resorts are having a tough time attracting hard-pressed holidaymakers, especially from those countries imposing strict economic constraints in an attempt to reach the criteria for a single European currency.

Mr Brackenbury said: "Mediterranean countries that in the past were low-cost now have a cost of living in resorts not dissimilar to the

level in Northern Europe. "The result for the North European is that it costs less to go to an all-inclusive hotel in the Dominican Republic than to go to a similar category hotel, half-board, in the Canaries. It is hardly surprising that there are many Europeans who had only dreamt of the Caribbean who are now seizing the opportunity presented to them."

As unemployment rages through much of mainland Europe, however, even those in work are saving hard, often because of the fear of redundancy.

## Continental coach tours go upmarket

By SIMON DE BRUXELLES

A NEW luxury coach company is to introduce club-class travel throughout Europe. The Glider service hopes to do for the coach what the Orient Express did for the train.

Instead of the usual 53 seats, the Glider has 27 air-craft-style reclining chairs, giving plenty of leg room and the ability to lie back. The company has also chosen routes intended to appeal to more sophisticated travellers, avoiding destinations that are popular with economy-class coaches.

They range from three-day trips to the north of France and the Low Countries to more substantial tours of the Côte d'Azur, the Rhineland, Norway and Eastern Europe. Hotels on the route have been selected for their quality and local character. Large chains have been avoided.

Christopher Brela, commercial manager of Citrus Travel, the parent company, said: "We went to the hotels expecting to vet them; instead, we found that they were vetting us on whether we could deliver the type of client they were used to."

The tours cost about £1,100 for a nine-night trip through Saxony and Bohemia.

## Fly to Corfu and visit Albania

By STEVE KEENAN

ALBANIA is being linked with Corfu in twin-centre package holidays offered by several tour operators for 1997. The opening of Albania to tourists has encouraged specialist companies such as Regent, Explore Worldwide and Sunvil to use the two-hour ferry crossing from Corfu to enable British holidaymakers to visit one of the least-known countries in Europe.

Noel Josephides, managing director of Sunvil, said: "Albania will be one of the very big places in the next decade, if it resists the temptation to make a fast buck. Right now, it has curiosity value; the country is not a resort. You can visit a country where you can't drive at more than 15mph on the main coastal road."

Sunvil is packaging flights, an overnight stay in Corfu, ferry crossing and five nights in Albania from about £600 next year, with the option of a second week in Corfu.

The move into Albania is helping operators that have had a tough year selling Corfu and the rest of the Greek islands. Corfu, Crete and Rhodes have suffered most from this year's holiday downturn; package sales are down

by 28 per cent. The murder of a British yachtsman in Corfu last month and complaints about poor airport facilities have compounded the image problem for Greece.

Interpol has been called in to help to track down boat thieves operating from nearby Albania who shot and killed the Briton.

At a British tour operators' conference in Corfu last week, Christanthos Sarlis, the island's mayor, launched a savage attack on central government, blaming the downturn on a lack of investment in Corfu. "Corfu has always been neglected by Greek central government," he said. "Hard efforts have to be made to revive this place."

The Association of Independent Tour Operators was told that Greece is to more than double its consumer advertising and funding of operator programmes next year. Panos Argyros, the UK director of the Greek Tourist Office, said that for 1997, the office is to spend £2 million on advertising and subsidising the brochures of 23 operators that offer diverse packages "rather than just sun, sea and sand".

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## Lufthansa unveils new-look cabins

THE battle for the lucrative business air travel market reached a new intensity yesterday as Lufthansa unveiled a multimillion pound package of improvements with which it hopes to challenge British Airways flights between the UK and Germany and on other key European routes, Harvey Elliott writes.

The new-look cabins with 52cm-wide grey leather seats will be unveiled on the airline's intra-European routes from tomorrow.

Lufthansa plans to emphasise the difference between business and economy class. It will have "ticketless" check-in procedures by phone for those prepared to pay more for a business class seat and service, while valets will meet business travellers arriving by car at the terminal, park it for them and then meet them on their return.

The new service will feature in a £1.2 million advertising campaign.

The growing importance of business-class travel has already led BA to upgrade its long-haul and European flights with remarkable success. Long-haul services, for example, have grabbed an



extra 6 per cent of market share since the introduction of the "cradle" seat and other services in a £50 million programme completed earlier this year.

Lufthansa is determined to fight back in Europe, where business travellers produce 19 per cent of the airline's total revenue.

Now BA is targeting domestic flights with a £10 million improvement programme aimed at trumping a similar move made last month by rival British Midland.

## Virgin to the rescue

VIRGIN rescued its customers this week when Eurostar passengers hit by a Belgian general strike were able to fly home from Brussels with Richard Branson's airline, Steve Keenan writes.

More than 4,000 passengers aboard Eurostar — which is part-owned by Virgin — were forced to disembark in Lille when the strike brought Bel-

gium's rail network to a standstill on Monday. They carried on to Brussels by coach.

Virgin was able to bring the passengers back on the same day under a new agreement with Sabena, the Belgian state airline, which enables it to operate crews on the route between Brussels and Heathrow.

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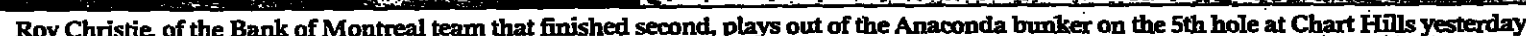
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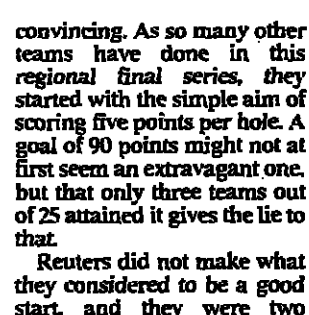


# Battered Britain have pride to play for

Phil Larder, the Britain coach, said: "I wish we did have a Gary Connolly or Jason Robinson in the backs to inject the explosive burst that



This Nick Faldo creation is stunning on first sight and improves the more closely it is examined. Its beauty is matched by its degree of difficulty. Yet Reuters' golf, on a day when the weather started peacefully but was made much tougher for the later groups by a capricious wind, was rarely less than



The solitary seven-points haul came on the 9th, and it took them to the turn on 46 points. Thompson's performance there was eccentric, to pitch it at its kindest, and yet totally effective. He hit a tree off the tee, then struck a six-

**SCORES:** 37: Reuters Ltd. 94: Bank of Montreal 51: Seattle Chamber of Commerce 58: Drakes Group Ltd.; Business Systems Group Ltd.; Exco Money Brokers UK Ltd.; Prebon Yarmine; Clute Connectivity Services 66: Capital City & Place Ltd. 68: National 36: Lloyds & Tokyo International; Marsh and McLennan & Parent Broking Ltd. 82: Mees-Perren Securities (UK) Ltd. 84: Deloitte & Touche 83: Inco & Co. Scientific and Business Systems Ltd. National Westminster Bank Umm Ltd. 82: Sedgwick Reinsurance Brokers Ltd. 83: Coutts & Co. 83: Curtis Holt Ltd. 78: National Australia Bank 78: Citicorp Standard Life Stationary Ltd. 74: Driffield Solutions

BY JENNY MACARTHUR

Grand Prix three weeks ago. Whitaker's younger brother, Michael, who has had the most disappointing year of his career, is hoping for a change of luck this week. He is riding Two Step, now fully recovered from the back injury that prompted his unfortunate performance in Atlanta.

The rider most likely to foil British hopes is Pieter Raymakers, of Holland, on Jewel's Emerald, already the winner of the Oslo and Helsinki World Cup qualifiers this month. Other leading partnerships include the former Olympic champion from Germany, Ludger Beerbaum, the winner last year on Ratina, and his compatriot, Franke Sloothak, who rides Weihehai, on which he won the world championship in 1994. Ulfried Kirchhof, winner of the individual gold medal in Aachen, completes the German contingent with Opstalan's VDI Emilion.

The controversy over the drinking habits of England internationals surfaced before the European championship last summer with reports of the nightclub party in Hong Kong and the Cathay Pacific flight back from the Far East. Batson, who was speaking in London at the United Kingdom Sports Council seminar on drugs, said that he was convinced that football did not have a problem with performance-enhancing drugs.

However, recent positive tests have showed that some players were taking social drugs. In 1994-95, there were 12 positive tests, of which eight were for marijuana and one was for an amphetamine. Last season this dropped to seven, five of which were for marijuana and one for cocaine.

This season the number of tests in professional football in England is being doubled to about 500. Already more than 200 have been carried out, with no positive tests.

Alan Hodson, who oversees the FA's programme, said: "The message is certainly being amplified by club doc-

"We are not trying to eliminate all drinking. We are just attempting to monitor where there is an excess of alcoholic consumption. We are making progress but we have to accept that there will always be hiccups."

<b>Dutch treat</b>	27 Qd2	Qxd2
	28 Rxd2	Nb4
	29 Nc2	Nc5
	30 Nxc3	Nxc3

At the time, Fionty's look-alike	31	Ned3	Nut3
in Tilburg, Holland. Lock van	32	Rac2	Rc7
Wely, the Dutch grandmaster,	33	Rb1	Nc5
had been making the running	34	Nc5	Rac5
for most of the last	35	Rc7	Rf6
week, for example, I published	36	Rb2	Rf6
in this column his very fine	37	Rc7	Rf7
win against Anatoly Karpov,	38	Rc6	Rf7
the Fide world champion. In	39	Rf8+	Ka7
the last round, though, Van	40	Rf8e	a5
Wely had to face his compatri-	41	Rc5e	Rac5
ot, Jeroen Piket. Sometimes	42	Rc5e	a3
on such occasions, a friendly	43	Rf5	a4
draw between co-nationals is	44	Rb1	c3
the result. In this instance, no	45	Kf1	Kc6
quarter was asked or given	46	Ke1	Kc6
and Piket wore down his	47	Kc2	Kc4
opponent's resistance in a long	48	c5	Ra5
endgame to be rewarded with	49	Ra1	Kc4
	50	c6	Rc6
	51	Bc3	Pd3

A snare of first prize.

White: Loek van Wely  
Black: Jeroen Piket

Tilburg, October 1996

King's Indian Defence

1	Kg4	Nf6
2	Nc3	g6
3	Na4	0-0
4	0-0	Bg7
5	Nf3	0-0
6	Ba2	Bg4
7	Ba3	Nf2
8	Ng1	Kxd7
9	Nge2	c5
10	0-0	a6
11	B4	Qa5
12	Bd2	Nb5
13	b3	Nd3+
14	N1	Nc7
15	g3	Re8
16	Kg2	Nb4
17	Be3	e5
18	0-0	f2f7
19	Qd8	Bb6
20	Ba1	Nc6
21	Qc2	0-0
22	Qa2	Bd4
23	a5	Qb4
24	Ba4	0-0

52	Ke1	Rd2+
53	Kf1	Rd7
54	Rd5	Q2
55	Rc3+	Kc2
56	Rc3+	Kd3
57	Rb3+	Kc4
58	Rd3+	Kc2
59	Rd8+	Kd2
60	Rc3+	Kd1

White resigns

Diagram of final position

Diagram of final position

□ Raymond Keene writes on chess  
Monday to Friday in Sport and in  
the *Weekend*

**By Raymond Keene**

White to play. This position is from the game Tal — Tringov, Amsterdam 1964. The brilliant Latvian grandmaster Mikhail Tal had a well deserved reputation as a master of attack. How did he demonstrate his skills here?

**Solution on page 45**

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 INVESTMENTS LIMITED  
 AND IN A MATTER OF  
 THE COMPANIES ACT 1985  
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 Justice (Chancery Division)  
 made 24th September 1996 con-  
 firming the reduction of the capi-  
 tal of the said company to £2,428,263.00  
 and the said company is hereby  
 approved by the Court showing  
 with respect to the capital of  
 the said company the several  
 particulars required by the  
 Statute in connection with the  
 reduction of the capital of the  
 said company.  
 DATED this 28th day of October 1996.  
 J. DAVIES ARNOLD COOPER  
 of 60 Foutham Street,  
 Manchester  
 Solicitors for the above-named  
 company.

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 RAILWAY COMPANY**  
 Copies of the Financial Sheet of the  
 above company, as at December 31  
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 NOTICE is HEREBY GIVEN, in  
 pursuance of section 75(1) of the  
 Insolvency Act 1986, that the  
 above-named companies will be  
 held at The Stoke Hotel, 299  
 High Street, London EC1A 3BB  
 from the 14th of November  
 1996 at 11.00am for the purpose  
 of a meeting of the creditors of  
 the said companies, the object  
 being, showing the events leading  
 to the application of the  
 Insolvency Administration Re-  
 ceivers, the manner in which the admini-  
 strative receivership has been  
 conducted and any proposal for  
 the company disposed of, and of  
 hearing any explanation that may  
 be given by the joint administra-  
 tive receivers. A copy of the  
 report of the Receiver (free of charge,  
 on written request to the joint  
 administrative receivers at  
 Arthur Anderson, 80 St. Pauls,  
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 3DF, to whom claims may be  
 made, and whose claims may  
 be made, and who are not entitled  
 to attend or be represented at the  
 meeting will be sent to the  
 creditors by the joint ad-  
 ministrative receivers, not  
 later than 12.00 hours on the  
 business day before the day fixed  
 for the meeting, details in writing  
 of the day fixed for the meeting  
 to be sent to him from the above-  
 named companies, and the claims  
 to be sent to him by the joint  
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## FOOTBALL

autographs at Goodison Park  
Middlesbrough in a deal worth

**Fowler: return to form**

Posts that are too tall, grass that is too long, a phantom whistler. What weird phenomenon next awaits Bristol Rovers at their new home?

That is a question that anyone who has ever worked with Ivanisevic has asked on many occasions. Depending on which side of bed he gets out of in the morning, he can either play like a dream or a drain. Yesterday, against Paul Haarhuis, of Holland, his heart was not in it and he was beaten 6-3, 6-2 in less than an hour.

## SNOOKER

**BANGKOK:** Central-Honda World's Trophy Group A: England by Ireland 6-3, Ireland by New Zealand 6-3, Group B: Singapore by Hong Kong 7-2, Canada by South Africa 8-1. (Group C: China by Thailand 4-2, England by United Arab Emirates 6-1, Group D: Australia by Holland 9-3, Malta by Malaysia 6-3)

Ashar Mahmood not out ..... 12  
Extras (0 1, 0 5, \* 6) ..... 12  
Total (7 wickets, 49.1 overs) ..... 238  
Squad: Mushfique and Shahid Nazir did not  
bat.  
FALL OF WICKETS 1-45 2-73 3-107 4-180  
5-196 6-200 7-224  
BOWLING J. Remo 10-0-64-1, G. Whittall  
9-1-48-2, Brent 5-0-29-0, A. Whittall 10-0-  
36-3, Steing 10-0-45-0, G. Flower 4-0-17-0  
Campbell 10-0-4-0.  
Man-of-the-match: Salim Malik.  
Umpires: Khizer Hayat (Pakistan) and  
Shahid Khan (Pakistan).

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## ICE HOCKEY

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NATIONAL LEAGUE (NHL): Boston 5 New  
Jersey 2, New York Rangers 3 Florida  
(OT), Tampa Bay 2 Chicago 2 (OT), Los  
Angeles 5 Toronto 2.

## SNOOKER

**BANGKOK:** Central-Honda World's Trophy Group A: England by Ireland 6-3, Ireland by New Zealand 6-3, Group B: Singapore by Hong Kong 7-2, Canada by South Africa 8-1. (Group C: China by Thailand 4-2, England by United Arab Emirates 6-1, Group D: Australia by Holland 9-3, Malta by Malaysia 6-3)

The Eagles started the season in excellent form, with Jiri Lala, their former Czech international, exciting to watch. They have not quite maintained that form, but a two-goal deficit is not insurmountable and they have a fine goaltender in Sven Rappi.

The Panthers will take nothing for granted this evening. Sheffield's greater depth could see them through, but Nottingham do not lack spirit and in Mike Blaisdell, their play-coach, they have one of the game's outstanding players.

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**T**he match against the States XV has been a glorious occasion for the Oxford University calendar for some time. A doft of the cap to some long-forgotten tradition, an excuse for a half-term frolic and a few beers. The score has never mattered much. Yesterday, it mattered not a jot, but the occasion was the most important in the 12-year history of the club.

It was a day dedicated to the memory of one burly, ebullient, dyed-in-the-wool Aussie figure of Ian Tucker, an afternoon that recalled the words of a long-serving oboist on *The Guardian*. Asked once how he coped with so much death, he replied that obituaries were a celebration of life not death. A celebration of life. Those were the exact words used to describe yesterday's match by Steve Hill, the director of rugby at Oxford University, who has had to navigate his student team through several emotional winters in the past three days.

Tucker died on Sunday evening at the age of 23, a day after suffering head injuries in a seemingly innocuous tackle in the closing minutes of a defeat by Saracens. Rugby players know their game is dangerous — statistics tell them so — but few believe that an incident so shockingly

innocent could cost them a team-mate. No one was to blame for Tucker's death except the sport that has given him a near lifetime's pleasure and, in these avaricious times, not a penny.

"We're going by the seat of our pants at the moment," Hill said. "It really is a matter of taking each day as it comes." Both sides wore armbands and the dark blue No 12 has been retired for the season as a mark of respect.

The process of rationalisation had begun



**Oxford University players**

three days before the impeccably observed silence at Ifley Road, which scoured the depths of tender emotions yesterday. On Monday evening, the team gathered to talk to the neurosurgeons who treated Tucker in vain. In more than 55 years of their medical experience, they could recall only two other similar cases.

It was, they added, a one-in-a-million chance. "They could not, of course," answer the one question everyone wanted them to," Hill said. The question "Why? Afterwards the team split into groups to have dinner and share their feelings. None felt much like playing again, let alone a matter of days after their friend's death. But sport has a

precious talent for applying a tourniquet to pain. First, playing became a possibility; then essential. It helped that the opposition was Stanley's, the team for whom Tucker had first advertised his talent in Oxford exactly a year before.

"It was an important release for the players," Hill said. "Another step on the way back. Ian himself would not have wanted this to be a sombre occasion. He was, in many ways, a stereotypical Australian, in your face all the time. This was the best way to

celebrate his life." Simon Halliday, the England centre and Oxford Blue, consulted Tucker's family before committing his team to the match and gave every one of them the chance of to pull out right up to the moment of kick-off.

Nevertheless, standing in a dark blue line, the Oxford players must have wondered just how cathartic the afternoon would prove. It seemed the silence would never end, not least for Tucker's family watching in the stands, as players forgot the macho ritu-

Nor would the images of land and sea even for a moment have been an Austin moment. When the Australian Trevor Walsh, Tucker's replacement at centre, was taken away in an ambulance for X-rays suffering from a blow to the side of the head, the thought came unaccountably grin. Thankfully, he was quickly released.

Today, a memorial service will be held in Keble College, which was Tucker's home for just a month. Another stage of the therapy. For the record, Oxford beat the Stanley's XV by a margin of nine tries. That he was nowhere to share a few himself would have been Ian Tucker's idea of martyrdom.

**TRISH JOHNSON**, of Great Britain, will be looking to extend her outstanding winning run in the 54-hole Spanish Open, which begins at La Manga Club today. Johnson, the only member of Europe's Solheim Cup side in the field, will start as a strong favourite to complete a fourth victory from six events. This is the last chance for players to clinch their places on the Tour for next year by finishing in the top 80 in the merit table. Tracey Craik, of Scotland, who is 84th, is in danger of having to return to the Tour qualifying school at La Manga in December, just 12 months after winning through last year.

**RUGBY LEAGUE:** Jack Robinson, the chairman of Wigan, revealed yesterday that the club will be called Wigan Warriors from the start of next season. The decision follows suggestions from the Super League, who are encouraging clubs to follow the example of Bradford Bulls by developing a strong marketing strategy. Warrington have dropped their old Wire nickname to become the Wolves.

**FOOTBALL:** Jimmy Thomson, the former Raith Rovers manager, has been appointed manager of Berwick, the struggling Bell's Scottish League second division club. Thomson replaces Ian Ross, who left earlier this month. It is his second spell in charge at Shielfield Park, having previously held the post in 1985-86. Thomson left Raith in August after only six months in charge.

**TENNIS:** Karen Cross, of Devon, beat the No 6 seed, Joelle Schad, from the Dominican Republic, 6-1, 4-6, 7-6 in the first round of the LTA Ladies' Challenger tournament in Edinburgh yesterday. The Kent junior, Abigail Tordoff, came within two points of upsetting the No 1 seed, Denisa Chladkova, before the Czech, herself only 17, recovered to win 2-6, 7-5, 6-2.

## Little to miss first international

Scotland A.....	20
Australia XV .....	47

**BY DAVID HANDS**  
**RUGBY CORRESPONDENT**

The rust was falling away in shards as the Australians left a damp, murky Netherlands yesterday. Their first appearance in Great Britain for four years illustrated fully the incense of this touring team, matched as they were against makeshift Scotland, the side that produced only the odd patch of sustained play.

Worryingly, too, the Australians have already been beset by injuries to leading players. They lost Garrick Morgan in Italy and now seem likely to be without Jason Little, their experienced centre, for the next fortnight. Little damaged recent knee ligaments, which will keep him out of the international with Scotland on November 9, and he was followed from the field by the combative Michael Prior, with damaged ankle ligaments.

Few judgments need be made at this stage. Apart from two games last week in Italy, most of the Australians have enjoyed a five-week hiatus from rugby and their management admits that this tour will be a significant learning experience for many of them—for Greg Smith, the coach, as well, since all his experience has been south of the equator. In that respect, it was instructive to see an Australian side applying itself to slippery British conditions by mauling industriously, but not always with the required control.

Smith was unhappy about the conditions, but admitted that his players lost and will be slow in telling them. "I think it's a lack of skill rather than unfamiliar conditions," he said. "You can't keep making excuses for players. They are the elite, they earn a lot of money, they should be able to pass and catch a ball."

The margin of defeat may be less than flattering to Scotland A, who remained in contention until the final quarter. For that, they were prepared to thank their involvement in European competition. "We could not have

**Little shrugs off the attentions of Lang before injury forced him to leave the field at Netherdale yesterday**

## Richmond move for South African pair

**BY OUR SPORTS STAFF**

For all the efforts of Wallace, who contributed substantially to its continuity that Scotland A achieved, the final quarter gave the touring side their chance to display to a three-day crowd their finishing skills. Payne's break gave them a second try and he benefited himself from a break and pass back inside by Howard.

In between, the Australians forwards worked Connors over from a lineup for a try that would have been easily recognised south of the border, but is not quite the style that Australia hope to adopt as

**RICHMOND**, the ambitious second-division club, confirmed yesterday that they are negotiating with Cabous van der Westhuizen and Steve Atherton, the Natal players, to join them.

John Kingston, the Richmond coaching director, said that discussions were still at an early stage. "We enjoyed the benefit of talks with them. We already have a very good side, but they are both quality players and we could be interested," he said.

"We shall hope to hear from them again after they return to South Africa this week," he

Muir has represented the South Africa seven-a-side team, and is the third Natal player to win a late call-up. Jeremy Thompson, another centre, and Adrian Garvey, the prop, have both been drafted in since the tour party was originally announced.

The Midland division have been forced to switch two of their tour matches next month because of the dispute between the Rugby Football Union and the English Professional Rugby Union Clubs. The Midlands were supposed to play Queensland at Northampton on November 24 and

"So what are we waiting for here? According to their spokesmen, these clubs have no wish to be part of the RFU and appear to me to be in breach of RFU by-laws. I can't see why they should not be expelled so that the rest of the game can get on with running its affairs in a sensible and affordable way."

wakened, or the second division, have already stated that they will not stand in the way of players wishing to appear for their divisions while other clubs are expected to follow their lead.

John Spencer, who chairs the North's playing committee, said: "I'm appalled at the decision to ask clubs to withdraw players. To do this as a protest illustrates perfectly their misconception of the nature of the game at other levels."

**Answers from page 42**

**GAU**  
(a) A territorial and administrative division of ancient Germany, including several villages or communities in the Middle Ages, a larger division, over which, under Frankish rule, was placed a *graf*. The word is a frequent final element of place-names, as Breisgau, Oberrheingau.  
**ANGICO**  
(a) A Brazilian name applied to the gum, etc., of the tropical tree *Caesalpinia coriaria*, which yields a hard, inflammable, and durable timber, and an astringent bark and a gum both used medicinally.  
**CATAPHATIC**  
(c) Defining God positively, or by positive statements. The opposite of *apophatic*. From the Greek, *kataphatikos* affirmative, *kataphatēn* to assert. "In an end age he [sc. Berdyayev] turned from a cataphatic to an apophatic theology."  
**DOPPER**  
(s) The sobriquet of a member of the Gereformeerde Kerk in South-Africa, a strictly orthodox Calvinistic denomination, commonly regarded as being old-fashioned in ideas, manner, and dress. Africans, of uncertain origin.

**SOLUTION TO WINNING CHESS MOVE**  
1 Bxd7+! Kxd7 (1 ... Kd8 2 Ng5 is hopeless) 2 Ng5+ Ke8 3 Qxb+ Kd8 4 Nf7+ Ke7 5 Qd6 checkmate.

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SCOTLAND and England justified their status as favourites for the Carrol Honda World Cup in Bangkok yesterday (Phil Yates writes). Scotland outclassed Singapore 9-0, while England defeated the United Arab Emirates 6-1.

Faced with the intimidating prospect of playing Stephen Hendry, John Higgins and Alan McManus, Singapore collapsed, collecting only 21 points in the first six frames, while Hendry fashioned a 103 clearance against Keith Boon Ee — a self-proclaimed gigolo — McManus compiled breaks of 84, 52 and 44 and Higgins

England were equally impressive against a UAE team coached by Doug Mounjoy, the former United Kingdom champion. England's hopes of recording the event's first whitewash were dashed when Masood Akil, an accountant with the Dubai police, pointed a long pink to defeat Nigel Bond. Ronnie O'Sullivan became an early front-runner for the

£4,000 prize for the tournament's highest break with a run of 127 against Akl.

Cliff Thorburn may have retired from the circuit, but his powers of concentration and recovery have not been impaired by competitive inactivity, as shown during Canada's 8-1 victory over South Africa in another group B contest. Thorburn, the 1980 world champion, squeezed past Silvino Francisco on the black after escaping 55-1, but his most remarkable escape came against Ffithes Naran, when he again prevailed on the black, despite requiring two snookers on the blue.

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